



Japanese opposition leader arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — Japanese opposition Socialist Party leader Takako Doi arrived in Amman from Baghdad Monday at the head of a five-member delegation on a several-day visit to Jordan as part of a tour in the region aimed at resolving the Gulf crisis peacefully. The delegation will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials. The delegation was received upon arrival at the airport by Director of the Foreign Ministry's Political Department Khaled Obaidat. Japan will give \$38 million in emergency aid to help foreign nationals leaving Iraq, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said. The money will be donated to the office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation (UNDRO), the ministry said in a statement.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي.

King meets Arafat, Attas

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday night held separate talks with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Yemeni Prime Minister Haidar Abu Bakr Al Attas. Both Mr. Arafat and Mr. Attas had arrived here from Baghdad. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the talks the King held with both leaders dealt with the latest developments in the Gulf crisis and prospects for a political settlement to the crisis. Both meetings were attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker, Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri, and the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh.

Volume 16 Number 4598

AMMAN TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1991, JUMA'DAH AL THANI 29, 1411

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Gulf deadline expires today

France unveils six-point peace plan for Gulf

Combined agency dispatches

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — France Monday unveiled a six-point peace plan calling for Iraqi troop withdrawal from Kuwait, U.N. peacekeeping forces and an international peace conference on the Middle East.

The proposal, to be presented to the Security Council, also calls for non-aggression guarantees for Iraq. It says the Security Council will work with Arab countries to promote a peaceful solution to the Gulf problem.

The most controversial aspect calls for a peace conference, at an appropriate time and properly structured, after Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait.

"The members of the council will collaborate actively in solution of other problems of the region, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Palesti-

nian problem," the proposal said, according to a draft obtained by the Associated Press.

Thomas Pickering, the American delegate to the U.N., immediately rejected the French proposal saying that "we think any effort should come from Saddam Hussein."

The French initiative urged Iraq to announce without delay its intention to withdraw from Kuwait according to a timetable and to begin a rapid, large-scale pullout.

But because the initiative would also refer to an eventual Middle East peace conference — a long-standing Iraqi demand that the United States rejects — Mr. Pickering voiced his objections.

"We made it very clear that we don't believe the creation of the linkage that appears to be in

the French text, or its effort to shave the Security Council resolutions (on the Gulf), is a real contribution at this time," he told reporters.

Iraq's U.N. ambassador said earlier that French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas probably would visit Baghdad in a last-ditch peace effort to avert war.

"It is very likely he will be going," Abdul Amir Al Anbari told reporters, referring to Mr. Dumas. He did not disclose further details, but diplomats suggested that Mr. Dumas would go to Baghdad on Tuesday.

"We believe France, perhaps better than many other members of the Security Council," Anbari said when asked about the French peace initiative.

(Continued on page 5)



His Majesty King Hussein with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim in Amman Monday (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

King says he did his utmost to avert war

Iraq wants U.N. chief to continue efforts — Waldheim

AMMAN (J.T.) — Iraq wants U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to continue his efforts on the Gulf crisis, Austrian President Kurt Waldheim said he was told by the Iraqi foreign minister Monday.

Waldheim, a former U.N. secretary general, spoke to Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz by telephone from Amman.

Waldheim told reporters: "President Saddam Hussein, as I was told by Mr. Aziz, wants to continue the efforts of the secretary general and of course other efforts."

His Majesty King Hussein, receiving Dr. Waldheim for Gulf crisis talks, said earlier he had done his utmost to stop a war over Iraq's occupation of

(Continued on page 5)

Jordanian forces on highest alert

By Ghadeer Taher
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein reaffirmed Monday that Jordan would defend itself "at all costs" as the Armed Forces, security and civil defence personnel were put on their highest alert since the beginning of the Gulf-crisis five months ago.

A senior military official said the 100,000-strong armed forces were placed "one-hour alert" since Monday morning — meaning that personnel cannot leave their bases for more than one hour at a time. Airforce pilots were confined to barracks in full gear "awaiting orders," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

With less than 48 hours before the expiry of a U.N. ultimatum for Iraq to relinquish Kuwait or face war, King Hussein met with Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu

Taleb and was briefed on the military preparations "to defend the homeland and to confront various challenges and dangers," the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

During an earlier visit to the 12th Royal Mechanised Division, the King, the Supreme Commander of Armed Forces, stressed that Jordan would defend itself "at all costs."

King Hussein voiced complete confidence that the Armed Forces would shoulder their responsibilities in full, Petra said. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan paid a separate visit to the Armed Forces General Headquarters, and then met jointly with the King and the chief of staff.

Wedged between Iraq and Israel, Jordan has voiced concern that it might be caught in

(Continued on page 5)

Iraq hardens position, but remains open for peace idea

Combined agency dispatches

WITH LESS than 36 hours for the expiry of the deadline for war or peace in the Gulf, Iraq sent its toughest message to the American-led alliance against Baghdad by ruling out any concessions over Kuwait but also signalled its willingness to cooperate with efforts to defuse the five-month-old crisis without war.

President Saddam Hussein, who met with a Yemeni delegation carrying a peace proposal which Sanaa said had American approval, sent an open letter to Saudi Arabia pledging Iraq would not attack the kingdom if the multinational force withdrew.

The president also met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and senior Libyan envoy Abdul Salam Jalloud and said his country was ready to fight to death

"in defence of the Arab Nation's cause."

Iraq's National Assembly unanimously voted to give President Saddam full authority in the Gulf crisis and members vowed to back him with their blood and souls.

All 250 members voted in favour of the resolution empowering President Saddam to use "all constitutional authority he deems necessary during the crisis to maintain Iraq's and the Arab Nation's rights and dignity."

The resolution made no reference to starting or declaring war. Iraq has said on several occasions it would not initiate hostilities.

One deputy, Talib Faraj, told the Associated Press after the vote: "We empowered the president to take whatever action he deems necessary to avert the scourges of war."

Another, clergyman Abdul Waham Al Hiti, said "we are headed for heaven and the road to heaven has always been under the shadow of swords. It is either life with dignity or death."

A two-hour debate preceded the vote. It was opened by the speaker of the assembly, Saadi Mehdi Saleh, who asked deputies to give total allegiance to President Saddam who he called "the knight of the Arab Nation."

The outcome was in little doubt as deputies stood and shouted "with our blood, our souls, we are ready to sacrifice for Saddam."

Saleh said the Iraqi nation and people were behind President Saddam in his showdown with "U.S. imperialism, Zionism and Arab stooges."

(Continued on page 5)

Perez de Cuellar sees no hope for peaceful outcome in Gulf

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said Monday that he sees no hope for a peaceful outcome to the Gulf crisis after his meeting with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Upon arriving in New York, he said President Saddam was unwilling to discuss potential diplomatic resolutions to the crisis or withdraw from Kuwait.

"No, he didn't express any desire to withdraw from Kuwait," Mr. Perez de Cuellar told reporters at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

"My visit has been, of course, interesting, but I have not been offered anything from the Iraqi

authorities which I can consider a step towards peace," he said. Asked whether he had lost hope, he replied, "In some ways, yes."

"You have a saying in English, 'you need two to Tango,' and I wanted very much to dance but I didn't find a nice lady to dance with," he said.

Asked if there was room for any new initiative, he said: "It is perhaps a little late for embarking on any other efforts."

The United Nations has given Iraq until midnight Tuesday to withdraw from Kuwait or face the threat of attack by the U.S.-led multinational force gathered in the Saudi desert.

The secretary-general was to brief the Security Council late Monday on his talks with the Iraqis.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar met for 2½ hours Sunday with President Saddam. He later met with French President Francois Mitterrand in Paris, followed by a meeting with Jacques Poos, foreign minister of Luxembourg, which currently holds the European Community (EC) presidency.

Asked about the substance of his talks with President Saddam, and whether they discussed an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

(Continued on page 5)

Jordan committed to peace — Badran

By Mariam Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — After spending months seeking a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis Jordan would not change its peace-seeking policies even in the event of war, Prime Minister Mudar Badran said in an interview with German television ZDF over the weekend.

"Jordan's promotion of a peaceful and just solution would not end even in the event of war, and its stand of neutrality would not change unless it was attacked," Badran said.

The prime minister said that he believed there was still time to explore further efforts (to avert war) and "the will still exists to reach a peaceful settlement," of the Gulf crisis.

Non-Arabs residing in Jordan have nothing to fear in terms of anti-foreign senti-

ment, the prime minister said, responding to a question about the safety of foreigners in the Kingdom.

"The Jordanians have a long history of hospitality and generosity towards visitors and non-Arabs residing in their midst and that will not change," Badran said.

While the prime minister stressed the necessity of finding a peaceful solution to the crisis and asserted that it was still at the top of the Jordanian government's agenda and that the safety of foreigners was assured, he nevertheless did not rule out the possibility of an attack against Jordan by Israel.

The prime minister said that in a "worst-case scenario" Israel might launch an attack against Jordan, adding that it was "equally dangerous" if

(Continued on page 5)



Protesters against the American-led campaign conclusion of a rally in Amman (Photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Thousands demonstrate in solidarity with Iraq

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Thousands of Jordanian men, women and children marched through the streets of the capital Monday to protest against the U.S. and its allies, and to voice support for Iraq and vow to fight against the West if war erupted.

Some 15,000 demonstrators marched from the Professional Association Complex in Shmeisani to the Amman national stadium at Sports City carrying pro-Iraqi and

anti-U.S. banners and chanting slogans promising to fight alongside Iraq against the U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition.

"Use your chemicals, Saddam," "go ahead, Saddam, we are with you all the way," and "Saddam, unite the land from Morocco to Bahrain," chanted the marchers in the streets as police held back traffic.

Carrying Jordanian, Palestinian and Iraqi flags and photographs of their leaders, demonstrators came from different political groups, including the Muslim Brother-

hood who carried the banner of Islam that read: "No God but Allah and Mohammad is His Prophet."

Several members from the Lower House of Parliament and political activists linked arms as they led the demonstration, organised by the professional unions in collaboration with the Muslim Brotherhood.

"This demonstration is to express our support for the Iraqi people and to condemn the U.S. policy in the region,"

(Continued on page 5)

12-year-old boy killed in Ramallah

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot and killed a 12-year-old Palestinian boy Monday in a clash with protesters in Ramallah, the army said.

An army statement said troops patrolling the town opened fire because they were endangered by the thrown objects. The 12-year-old was shot in the chest and died of his wound, it said.

The victim was not immediately identified. Palestinians said he was not carrying an identification paper and may have been from a nearby village.

The death raised to 791 the number of Palestinians killed by

Israeli soldiers and civilians in the more than three-year-old uprising against Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, according to an AP count.

At least 333 Palestinians have been slain by unknown assailants, as suspected collaborators with Israeli authorities. Fifty-seven Israelis have also died in the violence.

Meanwhile the Israeli supreme court told the army Monday to provide gas masks to the Palestinians in the occupied territories for use in case of a Gulf war.

Army Radio, reporting from

(Continued on page 5)

Gorbachev blames army for violence

VILNIUS (Agencies) — President Mikhail Gorbachev Monday said a local military commander ordered the use of force in the breakaway Republic of Lithuania, where an assault by Soviet troops Sunday claimed at least 14 lives.

"The manner of defence was decided by the commandant," Gorbachev said of the assault. "I learned only in the morning, the early morning, when they got me up. When it happened, no one knew."

Lithuania's foreign minister, who is in Poland with instructions to form a government in exile if Moscow takes over the republic, said the army is taking control in the Soviet Union.

"In Vilnius, the Soviet army is the enemy and nobody knows who is commanding it," said Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas.

Gorbachev said Sunday's assault came after a group of what he called "workers and intellectuals" asked the military commander in Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, to "give us protection."

He appeared to be referring to opponents of Lithuanian independence who have formed a self-declared national salvation committee.

Sunday's deaths were the first

(Continued on page 5)

January 15, 1991

١٥ / كانون ثاني ١٩٩١

NOTICE

To all employees and workmen of the American International Contractors Inc. (previously named George A. Fuller Company).

American International Contractors Inc., regrets to notify all its employees and workmen on the construction of the United States new Embassy in Amman of the suspension of its works on the project and the termination of their services from the company as from January 15, 1991.

Therefore all employees and workmen are kindly requested to call on our company after one month from the date of publication of this notice to receive their entitlements in accordance with the Jordanian Labour Law.



إعلان

الى جميع موظفي ومال شركة اميركان انترناشيونال كونتراكتورز انك (المسماة سابقا شركة جورج أ. فليزر).

يؤسف شركة اميركان انترناشيونال كونتراكتورز انك اشعار كافة موظفيها وعالها العاملين في مشروع بناء السفارة الأمريكية الجديدة في عمان عن تعليق أعمالها في المشروع والاستغناء عن خدماتهم اعتباراً من ١٥ / كانون ثاني ١٩٩١.

ولهذا، يرجى من جميع الموظفين والعاملين مراجعة الشركة بعد شهر من تاريخ نشر هذا الاعلان لتسلم مستحقاتهم امتساراً الى أحكام قانون العمل الأردني.

شركة اميركان انترناشيونال كونتراكتورز انك

Iraqis face more surveillance, security if war erupts

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and many of its allies, worried about possible guerrilla attacks, plan to step up surveillance of Iraqis and tighten security if war erupts in the Gulf.

As Tuesday's U.N. deadline nears for Iraqi forces to leave Kuwait or face war, the United States and other countries have prepared to more closely monitor Iraqi nationals considered a threat to security.

The United States, with more than 8,500 Iraqi residents or visitors, already has increased surveillance of Iraqi agents, tightened border security and placed tougher requirements on the entry into the country of anyone with an Iraqi or Kuwaiti passport.

The State Department has said the U.S. government has evidence that "terrorists supported by Iraq are planning to mount attacks," around the world if war breaks out.

But government security officials in North and South America, Europe and the Middle East have been rejected, for the time being, more drastic measures against Iraqis.

They said the wartime preparations do not include placing restrictions on all Iraqi citizens, rounding up suspected pro-Iraqi guerrilla operatives or putting Iraqis in mass internment camps.

"We've learned our lesson," a U.S. Justice Department spokesman said, referring to the highly controversial use of mass detention camps for Japanese-Americans during World War II.

"We have no plans to go around the country and arrest people," U.S. civil rights groups, however, are concerned that the U.S. government has gone too far by singling out more than 200 Arab-American leaders for questioning about potential guerrilla activities.

Democratic Representative Don Edwards of the House

Judiciary Committee, warned of government overreaction, saying, "inherent in the current crisis is the very real damage to civil liberties."

In Britain, where 90 Iraqis and all but four Iraqi diplomats have been expelled, officials said the government would continue monitoring and deporting any hostile Iraqis. They said there were no powers in place to intern people.

Of the 5,000 Iraqis living in or visiting Britain, a Home Office spokesman said officials didn't think the Iraqis pose a specific threat at the moment but added: "We have been keeping an eye on people who might pose a security threat... and we are continuing to do so."

Another European nation with a large Iraqi population is Germany, where 1,600 of the 5,500 Iraqis have requested political asylum.

The Interior Ministry in Bonn would not comment directly on what it planned to do with them in the event of war, but a spokesman cited unspecified general security measures due to the Gulf crisis and said more steps would be taken if needed.

Canada plans a similar approach for dealing with the estimated 10,000 Canadians of Iraqi descent, most of whom have lived in the country for decades.

Ray Boisvert, a spokesman for the Canadian security intelligence service, said, "individuals have nothing to worry about unless they are involved in activities which we suspect as a threat."

Even Middle Eastern nations, which are part of the coalition aligned against Baghdad, have adopted a cautious stance against Iraqis.

In Cairo, security sources say nothing will be done to Iraqis in Egypt if war breaks out unless they act suspiciously.

But extra security would be put on Iraqi diplomatic or commercial missions and if there were diplomats whom they felt could be a threat to Egypt's security they would be asked to leave the country, the sources said.

Saudi officials, said Iraqis there, estimated to number several hundred to 3,000 and most of whom are prominent members of their communities, were not viewed as a threat to security and that no discriminatory steps were likely. Officials in Bahrain and Qatar echoed those comments.

Latin American countries reported just a handful or no Iraqi nationals among their populations and therefore planned no special measures.

In Tokyo, a spokesman for the Iraqi embassy said the total number of Iraqis in Japan was 10 students and six diplomats and their families. They have not asked for any special protection after the Jan. 15 deadline.

WHO rejects bid

Iraq Monday failed to have the World Health Organisation's (WHO) executive board take a stand against the U.N. trade embargo, which it said is causing a "grave and real" health problem for its 18-million population.

The body voted 11-3 against including in its agenda an item relating to "restrictions on the provision of drugs, vaccines and food or on their free movement across international boundaries."

The delegates from Libya and Yemen joined the Iraqi representative in supporting the request for discussing the item.

The delegates from the Soviet Union, China, and Yugoslavia, were among the abstentions in the show-of-hands vote.



JUST IN CASE: Shoppers thronged supermarkets and groceries in Amman Monday to stockpile food against the

backdrop of fears that war could erupt in the Gulf after the Jan. 15 deadline set by the U.N. for Iraq to withdraw

from Kuwait or face military attack (Photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Hawke tells Australians to stop harassing Arabs

CANBERRA (R) — Prime Minister Bob Hawke told Australians Monday to stop harassing the country's Arab community, many of whom have complained of a mounting campaign of abuse since the start of the Gulf crisis.

Hawke issued his appeal after meeting leaders of the country's 120,000-member Muslim community, who had sought his help after a spate of attacks since the start of the crisis in August.

"I condemn in the strongest possible terms acts of racism and outright harassment being suffered by Arab Australians and Australian Muslims," Hawke said in a statement.

The New South Wales state government opened a telephone hotline that members of the Muslim community can use to lodge complaints of abuse. A special committee has been set up to deal with the grievances.

Arab women have been spat upon and their veils torn off, said a spokesman for the 15-member delegation to parliament.

Police have stepped up surveillance of Islamic community buildings after some mosques were vandalised.

It would be nonsense to suggest the Gulf crisis made people of Arab origin disloyal, said Hawke, who has in the past called for a halt to harassment of the Asian community.

"I am particularly concerned that the recent increase in such incidents towards Arab Australians and Australian Muslims relates to the crisis in the Gulf," said Hawke, who has sent three warships to join allied forces in the region.

Hawke's Labour government has pledged to create a harmonious multi-cultural society from Australia's more than 100 ethnic groups, most of them of European origin.

"The prime minister is taking a very broad and very powerful stand and we appreciate it," Bilal Cleland, leader of the Islamic Council for the State of Victoria, told reporters after the meeting.

Only handful of U.S. allies will take part in any assault

NICOSIA (AP) — Although 28 countries have contributed to the U.S.-led multinational force in the Gulf, just a handful are likely to join an offensive against Iraq if war breaks out.

Only the United States and Britain have conveyed clearly their willingness to fight, including possible ground and air attacks on Iraq.

France, the only other Western nation with ground troops in the force, has been more ambivalent.

The most important Arab allies, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, have coordinated closely with the Americans, but have not spelled out their role in an offensive.

Even Kuwait's 7,000 troops, while ready to fight for the liberation of their homeland, are not expected to join an attack on Iraqi territory.

Syria has one of the largest contingents — 19,000 troops, including an armoured division. But President Hafez Al Assad says they are deployed only to defend Saudi Arabia and will quit the alliance if Israel becomes

involved, even if in self-defence.

Countries ranging from wealthy Germany to impoverished Niger also have contributed funds, equipment or soldiers to the multinational force. But few, if any, are expected to join an all-out offensive.

Many of them — both Western and Muslim — face strong anti-war sentiment at home.

Large protests took place over the weekend across Europe, while in Pakistan even cabinet ministers have joined a call for withdrawing the 10,000 Pakistani troops committed to Saudi Arabia.

Twice previously since World War II, the United States has found itself playing the dominant role in a nominally allied war effort. Fifteen countries joined U.S. troops in the U.N.-authorised campaign in Korea and a handful fought in Vietnam.

U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney, visiting the Gulf last month, acknowledged that many of the allies would not join an offensive.

Arabs, Indians protest in New Delhi against war

NEW DELHI (R) — Hundreds of Arab students and Indians, some chanting "Long live Saddam," demonstrated in New Delhi Monday against the U.S. threat to use force against Iraq. Brandishing posters of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the protesters marched to the U.S. embassy and the British high commission.

"We are here to protest against the hostilities intended to be launched against Iraq and the Arab World," a leader of the National Union of Iraqi Students and Youth said. "We are fully in support of Saddam Hussein's actions."

The Arab community in India opposed U.S. President George Bush's decision to force Iraq to comply with the United Nations' demand that Iraq withdraw from Kuwait, said the student leader, who declined to be named.

As the U.N. deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait nears, Bush has said the United States is "prepared to do what we have to do" to get Iraq out of Kuwait. Helmeted Indian paramilitary troops armed with rifles and wooden staves prevented more than 200 Syrians, Palestinians, Jordanians and others, from approaching the U.S. embassy. The protesters then marched

to the British high commission, shouting "Major, Major, down down," before boarding buses for home.

Arabs were angry that British Prime Minister John Major has backed Bush fully, a protest leader said. "Sometimes Britain seems to be looking for war more than the United States."

Indians, including some forced to leave Kuwait after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion, staged a protest near the U.S. embassy, calling for peace in the Gulf.

"I have lost everything and want peace to return so that I can go back to Kuwait and continue with my business," said Shamsuddin Mohammad, who ran a hotel for Indians and Arabs in the emirate.

"I came to India with only my clothes on me. I want to go back to Kuwait. Everything I own is there," said Mohammad, who fled overland to India following the occupation.

India airlifted 140,000 of its nationals from Kuwait after the invasion. Many others returned through Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan.

India says it is concerned for 1.2 million Indian workers in the Gulf area and Saudi Arabia, and has told its ambassadors in the region to reassure its citizens.

Saudi Arabia prepares population for war

RIYADH (R) — The Saudi authorities are preparing the population for war, warning them against security violations and rumour-mongering and giving them last-minute instruction on how to protect themselves against chemical weapons.

The kingdom would be the main launching-pad for any attack on Iraqi forces in Kuwait by the U.S.-dominated multinational force deployed in the Gulf.

Some 615,000 allied troops, most of them on Saudi territory, are on standby for hostilities when a U.N. deadline for Iraq to withdraw from the emirate or face being driven out expires at 8 a.m. on Wednesday (0500 GMT).

On Sunday evening, the Saudi Interior Ministry said anyone responsible for unrest or violations or national security would face the severest penalty under Islamic law. This was because of "the current delicate situation," a ministry statement said.

Foreigners, millions of whom were in Saudi Arabia, should be "orderly in carrying out their activities in the various government and private sectors," the statement added.

Newspapers this week have also been campaigning against rumours and on Monday the Arabic newspaper Al Riyadh denied that there would power cuts in the capital over the next two days.

People had been buying up tor-

ches, electric lamps and candles but this was completely unnecessary, it quoted an electricity board official as saying.

On television army officers have been demonstrated how to use gas masks and how to protect the house from poisonous gases in the event of a chemical attack.

The civil defence authorities said they would start selling gas masks on Monday at 100 riyals (\$27) each. Riyadh residents have shown little interest in obtaining them, as many feel the capital, more than 400 kilometres from the Iraqi border, is immune from Iraqi air raids or missile attacks.

The capital tested its air raid warning sirens again on Monday morning but, as on Sunday, people ignored civil defence instructions to take shelter in nearby buildings.

Saudi's Interior Ministry statement was addressed to all residents in the kingdom of various Arab, Muslim and friendly countries.

Western intelligence sources say that if war erupts in the Gulf an upsurge in extremism can be expected in countries allied against Iraq.

"The Saudi Arabian government has repeatedly announced that it will not be lenient with anyone trying to undermine the country's security and will not hesitate to inflict deterring punishment on him," the statement said.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq adds 'God is Great' to flag

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraq will add the words "God is Great" to its national flag, the Iraq News Agency reported Monday. The agency said President Saddam Hussein ordered the move at a Sunday meeting of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council. The Iraqi flag consists of three horizontal stripes of red, white and black with three stars in the white band. It was not disclosed where the words in Arabic "Allah Akbar" will be placed on the flag. Iraq is ruled by the Arab Baath Socialist Party which is secular and includes Christians among its top leadership.

Bahrain tells private schools to close

BAHRAIN (R) — Bahrain told private schools to join state-run institutions and close from Wednesday when the United Nations deadline for Iraq to leave Kuwait expires, diplomats said Monday. Officials were not immediately available to comment. The government said Sunday state schools and universities would close between Jan. 16 and Feb. 9, because of the Gulf crisis. The order had not been extended to private schools. Holidays due in February are being advanced to keep children home when the deadline passes at 8 a.m. (0500 GMT) on Wednesday.

Saudis pressing Manila not to evacuate workers

MANILA (R) — The Saudi Arabian government has asked the Philippines not to pull out its 390,000 workers from the kingdom. Foreign Secretary Raul Manglapus said Monday. Manglapus told a news conference Riyadh "specifically requested (the Manila government) not to start any movement" to evacuate its workers because it might disrupt Saudi Arabia's economy. At least 110,000 Filipinos are working at oilfields and other facilities in eastern Saudi Arabia which can be reached by Iraqi missiles if war erupts in the Gulf, he said. "They are not being internationally exposed to war. We do know that they (the Iraqis) have missiles that can reach the area. They're not being forced by our government to stay there. We cannot forbid our people from going to Saudi Arabia," he said. The Saudi government had given assurances that all the workers would be evacuated by land to Abu Dhabi or Jeddah, out of range of Iraqi missiles, if hostilities broke out after the Jan. 15, deadline for Iraq to quit Kuwait, he said.

Pro-Iraq rally in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The leader of a small but powerful Muslim party is seeking recruits to fight with Iraq in a "holy war" against the United States, the target of demonstrations in all major cities Monday. Thousands of demonstrators marched through Karachi, the country's largest city, waving giant posters of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and chanting "Friends of America are friends of Israel." Demonstrators throughout this predominantly Muslim nation of 120 million people burned effigies of U.S. President George Bush and the U.S. flag. Hundreds of baton-wielding police in riot gear were deployed throughout Islamabad, the federal capital, where Muslim militants burned down the U.S. embassy in 1979. Foreigners, particularly Westerners, were warned to lock their doors and stay inside. A few busloads of rock-throwing students were swiftly rerouted away from the American Cultural Centre in Islamabad. They left behind an effigy of Bush. In the neighbouring city of Rawalpindi, another demonstration billed as a pro-Saddam rally was organised.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE
15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children programmes
18:00 News Summary
18:10 Local programme
19:45 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:30 Programme review
21:40 Local programme
23:00 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Cartoons
18:30 Documentary
19:00 News in French
19:15 Aujourd'hui en Jordanie
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Charles in Charge
21:10 Life Revolution
22:00 News in English
22:20 French film

PRAYER TIMES

05:11 Fajr
06:32 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:45 Asr
14:34 'Asr
16:58 Maghrib
18:19 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweifish Tel. 810740.
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785, 665326.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Teressantia Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Fair weather will prevail and winds will be northerly moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalil Al Jabali 740740
Dr. Munir Qaqiah 898101
Dr. Youssef Rashid 896301
Dr. Tayseer Khader 694857
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairooka pharmacy 626722
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 649445
Shmiciant pharmacy 637660
IRBID:
Dr. Kamal Al Najjar (—)
Al Shama pharmacy (275825)

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halasa (—)
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 874667
Complaints 874667
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Ann 644281/6
Alkheh Maternity, J. Ann 64241/2
Jabal Amman Matern. 642362
Malhos, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmiciant 664171/4
Shmiciant Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muashar Hospital 66727/9
The Islamic, Abdali 664127/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marfa 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:45 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
09:15 Muscat (RJ)
09:15 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:30 Cairo (RJ)
10:30 Dubai (RJ)
10:45 Jeddah, Aqaba (RJ)
10:55 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
16:00 Cairo (RJ)
17:00 Montreal, New York (RJ)
19:00 Belgrade (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:15 London (RJ)
11:30 Belgrade (RJ)
11:40 Tripoli (RJ)
12:00 Cairo (RJ)
12:00 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:15 Vienna (RJ)
12:45 Rome, Madrid (RJ)
13:00 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
13:15 Paris (RJ)
20:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:00 Dhahran (RJ)
21:30 Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:15 Larnaca (RJ)
22:15 Damascus (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:15 Beirut (ME)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in file per kg.

Apples 380 / 480
Bananas 500 / 450
Bananas (Mukammal) 450 / 400
Beans 420 / 380
Cabbage 50 / 30
Carrots 200 / 150
Cauliflower 180 / 120
Corn 200 / 150
Cucumbers (large) 120 / 60
Cucumbers (small) 260 / 200
Dates 300 / 400
Eggplant 200 / 150
Garlic 1700 / 1500
Lemon 200 / 150
Mallow 180 / 120
Marrow (large) 120 / 60
Marrow (small) 260 / 200
Onion (dry) 160 / 120
Onion (green) 600 / 500
Okra 600 / 500
Orange 400 / 180
Pepper (hot) 280 / 220
Pepper (sweet) 150 / 100
Potato 330 / 280
Radish 150 / 100
Sage 400 / 300
Spinach 120 / 80
Tomatoes 180 / 120

repar
war



Finance and Acting Planning Minister Basel Jarrah (centre) signs documents of grant provided by the government of Canada for which Ambassador A. Percy Sherwood signed the aid agreement (Petra photo)

Canada grants Jordan \$12.7m

AMMAN (J.T.) — Canada is giving Jordan a grant of 15 million Canadian dollars (nearly 2.75 million) as part of Ottawa's promised aid to Jordan to help the Kingdom offset part of the severe damages to its national economy as a result of the Gulf crisis.

The grant documents were signed at the Ministry of Planning by Canada's ambassador to Jordan, A. Percy Sherwood and Finance and Acting Planning Minister Basel Jarrah.

The grant would finance Jordan's purchases of Canadian goods. A later agreement would specify the types of those goods needed by Jordan, according to an official statement issued after the signing ceremony.

Ministry of Planning officials said that the Canadian government has promised to provide Jordan with another 10 million Canadian dollars as a contribution to the Kingdom's 1991 fiscal budget.

Canada announced an economic programme totalling some \$17.5 million to Jordan for 1990 and 1991 and said that the assistance would help Jordan exploit its natural gas and continued efforts in search of oil.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney had said that Canada will offer Jordan other forms of assistance through the Canadian Agency for International Development to help carry out the Kingdom's economic restructuring programmes and food strategy.

Mulroney said that Canada will also provide assistance to back the Jordanian government's public administration training and industrial projects.

Canada had granted Jordan \$19 million Canadian dollars over the past two years through the Petro-Canada International Agency for Cooperation which has been helping Jordan to explore for oil and natural gas in the Rishleh area north east of Jordan.

Red Crescent Society widens door for humanitarian assistance

AMMAN (J.T.) — Complementing preparations by the Civil Defence Department (CDD) and other government agencies to deal with any emergency in the event of war breaking out in the Gulf, the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) Monday declared its full readiness to provide relief and humanitarian assistance to displaced persons arriving here from Kuwait and Iraq.

JNRCS President Ahmad Abu Qoura said that a special emergency team has been set up to coordinate services at all levels should war start. The JNRCS operates two evacuee camps at Azraq, northeast of here, and will be ready to provide refuge to evacuees from Iraq and Kuwait in cooperation with the local authorities, said Abu Qoura in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The JNRCS's services will complement those of the Jordanian armed forces and the Health Ministry under difficult circumstances, Abu Qoura noted.

He said that a JNRCS special committee has now embarked on providing the society's Al Hilal Hospital at Ashrafieh with additional ambulances and taken other precautionary measures to deal with any emergency in times of need.

The CDD earlier announced full readiness to provide assistance to the public in case of war breaking out, and said that it would be conducting a series of measures to test the country's readiness. Committees have been set up around the country to take charge of rescue and first aid operations to be working under the Higher Civil Defence Council chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Salem Masadeh.

The Health Ministry for its part is being readied for emergencies, and according to Dr. Mustafa Al Barmawi, director general of the Hospital Management Department at the Ministry of Health, coordination exists between hospitals and health centres in various regions through a series of plans and roads to follow up the implementation of emergency plans.

Abu Qoura said that he had discussed with the head of the International Red Cross (ICRC) humanitarian services in the event of war in the region. The question of ensuring relief supplies like food and medicine to the evacuees was taken up with the Amman ICRC office.

Over the past five months, more than 860,000 evacuees mostly Asians crossed into Jordan and were put up in camps near the border with Iraq or in Amman as well as near airports prior to their repatriation.

Jordan has spent nearly \$56 million on the evacuees, but because of the delay in the promised international assistance the government on Jan. 9 announced the closure of the Iraqi-Jordan border in the face of the foreign nationals evacuated from Kuwait and Iraq.

The announcement of the closure followed repeated Jordanian appeals for international help and warnings that the Kingdom was unable to cope with any massive wave of evacuees.

Only days before the closure decision, the government announced its consent to allow nearly 5,000 Vietnamese evacuees to cross into Jordan. The Vietnamese are now being repatriated with the help of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Arab youth thank King, urge peace

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Arab Youth Forum (AYF) Monday sent His Majesty King Hussein and the heads of state of four other countries messages appealing for efforts to be made to avert war in the Gulf.

A cable to the King stressed that the Amman-based AYF will put up all its potential and resources for the service of Arab causes. The cable voiced appreciation of the King's endeavours and said that the hostile attitudes being adopted by certain Arab countries against Jordan were the price which the Kingdom is paying for adopting a national stand and supporting right and justice.

One cable went to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, urging him to make last ditch efforts to avert war, and another went to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad calling for increased efforts to find a peaceful and just solution to the Gulf crisis.

The AYF also sent a cable to French President Francois Mitterrand calling on France to exercise a historic role of achieving peace and justice, and to pressure the U.S. administration and Israel into accepting U.N. Security Council resolutions and international legality in all Middle East issues. A cable to U.S. President George Bush reminded him of the catastrophic consequences awaiting the world in the event of war in the Gulf.

The AYF cable said that the United States would not be able to maintain good relations with the Arab World if it continued to be arrogant and provided continued support for Israel's aggression on the Arabs.

The United States, the cable said, is in a position to push the world towards the precipice or towards peace and justice.

Parliament panel passes economic crimes draft law

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament's legal committee approved in a meeting held Monday under the chairmanship of deputy Hussein Mjalli the economic crimes draft law. The House's financial committee also held a meeting under the chairmanship of deputy Abdullah Ensour and approved the resignation of the committee's rapporteur deputy Abdul-

Jordan celebrates Arbor Day today

AMMAN (J.T.) — Arbor Day celebrations will be held in Jordan Tuesday when thousands of people are expected to plant fruit and forest trees distributed by the Ministry of Agriculture's nurseries.

The main celebration will be held at a site in the Yajouz district under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein. A statement said that thousands of people will take part in planting olive trees which symbolise peace and amity among people.

Her Majesty Queen Noor is also expected to join students of the Nursing College at Yajouz in planting trees as part of the country's Arbor Day celebrations.

A statement said the Queen would be joined by the 496 male and female students in planting trees on the premises of the college which was opened last November.

The college which was inaugurated by the Queen is located on a 500 dunum land most of which would be planted with trees.

On the eve of Arbor Day, engineer Lutfi Hweidi, director of the ministry's Department of Afforestation said that fires were regarded as the main danger to forests and thousands of trees were lost every year in fires started by vacationers.

He noted that cutting down trees, industrial waste and factory dust tend to pollute the atmosphere and kill plants.

Hweidi estimated Jordan's loss of trees through various means at 10,000 annually.

The Ministry of Agriculture's nurseries earlier announced that it was producing nearly five million saplings of fruit and forest trees this year which it distributed for a nominal price to public organisations, schools and individuals to be planted in the agricultural season.

According to Hweidi, the total area of forest trees in Jordan amounts to more than 280,000 dunums of land.

Last year, the ministry announced a plan for greening Jordan by the year 2000 and organised tree planting celebrations at Jizeh, south of Amman, and near the Queen Alia International Airport on the highway.

According to ministry sources only 5,000 dunums of land were covered with trees in 1951 and the number had risen to 50,000 dunums by the end of 1989.

Hweidi said in his statement that the Ministry of Agriculture adopted a plan of planting trees on 30,000 dunums of land every year. The trees, he said, have an economic wealth for Jordan represented in the timber which increases in value at the rate of JD 3.5 million annually.

Hweidi said that the ministry owns 13 nurseries which produce nearly nine million saplings every year.

Physicists highlight dangers of war

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The association of Jordanian Physicists for the Prevention of Nuclear War (JPPNW) Sunday organised a roundtable conference in an urgent attempt to call for the avoidance of war.

The outcome of the discussions was an appeal to the world community and to all different organisations and popular committees to pressure political leaders to avert a war, according to Dr. Hassan Badran, an ear, nose and throat specialist and a member of the JPPNW.

"In our appeal, we urged to give peace a chance explaining the consequences of war not only throughout the region but also the entire world, which would be affected in case chemical and biological warfare were used," Badran said.

The appeal voiced surprise that in all other crisis throughout the world, more effort was seen in giving diplomacy and negotiations a chance. "Why in this crisis has not enough chance been given to negotiations?" the appeal said.

Also during the roundtable, a committee was formed in order to exert all efforts in sending appeals, telegrams as well as organising marches for peace.

According to Iyad Qattan, director of the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC), the RCC will be used as an operations room. It will be equipped with communication means so that all societies and organisations including peace establishments throughout the world, can have information about Jordan and Iraq in this crisis.

The symposium was attended by 30 representatives from the Physicists Association, the Jordan National Red Crescent Society, the Conservation of Nature and other organisations and popular committees. Three lectures were presented, tackling the consequences of a war in the Gulf, how contact can be made with the help of other organisations abroad and what sort of relations to use in relaying messages to other societies in the world.

One of the lectures given by Badran stressed the efforts made by the JPPNW during the last three years and particularly during the Gulf crisis.

"We have been sending many appeals and declarations to all the affiliations in the world, explaining the danger of the crisis and how it could lead to worldwide disaster," Badran said. He told the Jordan Times that as a response, many of the affiliates held meetings and some even resulted in rallies like the one in Bonn, Germany last month where candles were held and



Prime Minister Mudar Badran listens to Abdul Halim Khaddam, the secretary-general of the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions, speaking of the difficult conditions of Jordanian workers during the current economic slowdown (Petra photo)

Government endeavours to improve job security and welfare to workers

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran announced Monday that the prime ministry was now putting the finishing touches to the new labour law which will later be submitted to the Lower House of Parliament for debate and final approval.

The new labour law would provide further protection to the Jordanian workers and would give them immunity against arbitrary dismissal from private sector institutions and companies, the prime minister said at a meeting in his office with Abdul Halim Khaddam, secretary-general of the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions and members of the federation's executive bureau with whom he reviewed general conditions of workers in Jordan as well as union activities.

The government seeks to implement social security laws in full to cover all the workers; and through this law the government plans to offer training to drivers at the special Vocational Training Centre for drivers in Jordan, the prime minister said.

Khaddam expressed the readiness of workers and labourers to contribute to the ongoing measures taken by the government in defence of the homeland and announced the creation of emergency committees to coordinate matters in this respect.

The prime minister voiced the government's appreciation of the labourers' initiative and said the Ministry of Interior, the Civil Defence and the Peoples Army would be ready to cooperate with the workers to serve the country.

Badran also paid tribute to all workers who have vowed to continue their endeavours at all production factories under any circumstances.

The prime minister listened to the workers' union views and complaints specially problems related to unemployment among workers. Khaddam complained about the dismissal of workers from private sector companies and requested that the government help ensure the continued employment of drivers and demanded that all types of workers be covered by the Social Security Corporation law.

The prime minister expressed full understanding of the workers' problems and promised to settle them within the government's means and through the implementation of the new labour law.

Later, Khaddam and his colleagues said in a statement that the prime minister has shown deep concern over the workers' problems.

They also said they were demanding the creation of a special bank which can take charge of the workers' funds and savings by investing them in income-generating projects.

The federation's executive bureau includes Mazen Maaitah, Walid Khayyat, Mahmoud Hirzallah, Yousef Al Momani, Ahmad Abu Rawwaa, Abdul Rahim Al Haj Hassan, Abdul Razzaq Mohammad Saeed, Ahmad Wanas Al Shreideh, Rida Hussein Hassan, Fawzi Al Dusi and Haidar Rashid.

Water supplies get special attention from ministry

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation is joining the national efforts in preparation for any emergency concerning water supplies around the country under difficult circumstances.

A special operations room has been set up at the ministry to be in contact around the clock with the departments of water and irrigation in all provinces to check on water supplies and ensure speedy services to the public, according to Water and Irrigation Minister Saad Hayel Srour.

The ministry has installed 23 mini-operation rooms in the various governorates manned by specialists, engineers and officials for 24 hours a day and they have commenced duty Monday and until further notice, the minister said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The main operations room in the ministry has prepared an emergency plan which would be put into force should adverse circumstances occur and the ministry has also provided the various pumping stations with alternative means to ensure water pumping should the main power supply fail for any reason, the minister added.

In addition, the ministry has stored large amounts of drinking water in tanks and towers available to its departments as well as the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), and has made available sufficient numbers of water tanker trucks to carry water to various areas should the need arise, Srour noted.

In all its operations Srour noted, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation is maintaining close coordination and cooperation with the Civil Defence Department and the Greater Amman Municipality as well as other various concerned departments to ensure public safety in all matters.

At the same time, he said, ministry teams would maintain its task of testing water samples taken from springs to ensure that potable water is fit for human consumption.

"Amman's Appeal for Peace and the Prevention of War" gathering calls for a public march tonight under the motto "No For War ... Yes For Peace"

"Amman's Appeal for Peace and the Prevention of War" gathering which was established in response to a call by the Jordanian Doctors Society for the Prevention of Nuclear War in cooperation with the Royal Cultural Centre, and in which representatives of 40 societies, committees and organisations as well as public figures are participating, calls the Jordanian people to express their rejection and opposition to war and to address the international public opinion by taking part in a peace march and to carry candles and olive branches tonight, Tuesday, January 15, 1991.

The march will start from the Professional Associations Complex at 10 p.m. and will end in front of the United Nations headquarters in Amman at 12 midnight.

Twelve midnight is the time set by the U.S. as the deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait and after which the use of force is authorised and any peace move is rejected.

At this timing the world nations will participate in similar marches under the motto: "No For War ... Yes For Peace."

The gathering appeals to all organisations, societies and committees to coordinate with the gathering for this march, and asks all participants to chant altogether at exactly 12 midnight:

"No For War ... Yes For Peace"

The gathering also appeals to Jordanian citizens in all the Jordanian cities and villages to organise similar marches.

UNDP chief begins visit

AMMAN (Petra) — United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Director-General William Draper arrived in Amman Monday on a three-day official visit to Jordan during which he will meet several senior Jordanian officials.

Draper said he aims in his visit to Jordan to get acquainted with the work process of the UNDP development projects in Jordan.

Dubai businesses fear trade loss more than Iraqi missiles

DUBAI (R) — In the picturesque port of Dubai, a trading hub for centuries, the fear on the eve of a possible war in the Gulf is less of chemical bombs or Iraqi missiles than of lost business.

Some 800 kilometres south of Kuwait, Dubai and other cities of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are out of Iraqi missile range and unlikely targets for a land or sea invasion.

But business is bad. "The UAE is far from any crisis in the region, although it is in the same Gulf. We are probably better off than other Gulf states," said Abdul Rahman Mutaiwee, director general of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce.

But he added: "Whatever we say, when there is war you can't limit its effect. Nobody can predict

what's going to happen."

Indian gold merchant Nagin Dhakan stood before cascades of glittering necklaces in his empty shop and admitted business was bad in the run-up to Tuesday's U.N. deadline for Iraq to leave Kuwait or face attack.

Dhakan, ensconced in the normally bustling gold souk, said he was losing 1,000 dirhams (\$271) a day as consumers put off non-essential purchases. One electronics supplier said sales last week were 75 per cent below the norm.

The dollar edged upwards in exchange houses to 3.69 dirhams Monday from 3.67 dirhams last week, reflecting more demand for transfers, but there have been no panic withdrawals like those that followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Some nine billion dirhams (\$2.44 billion) left the country

then but Mutaiwee said he did not expect a repeat of that even if war broke out.

"We have proved we will not restrict capital outflows. Nobody should have to do this if they have the freedom to transfer out at any time," he said.

More than half the airlines serving Dubai airport, the busiest in the region, have cancelled flights because of increased insurance costs. Hotel bookings have plummeted.

Some households have built up stocks of water and food but few expect to use them. The U.S. embassy has told Americans to stay calm, and there has been no rush for plane seats out.

"We are not facing another Kuwait," said an embassy letter to the American community.

The embassy had no plans to issue gas masks. It estimated the

chances of a conventional attack as "virtually nil" but said there was a high risk of terrorist attack against Americans.

Hundreds of off-duty U.S. servicemen pack the bars and stroll the streets and air-conditioned shopping malls, buying music cassettes, carpets and hamburgers.

Neither they nor the country's 60,000 Kuwaiti refugees are any replacement for the purchasing power of local buyers.

But one positive spin-off from any war could be an increase in the traditional dhow trade, a reexport business to other Gulf ports in nimble wooden boats.

If big shipping lines cancel sailings to Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, dhows could transport goods from Dubai or UAE ports safely outside the Gulf to the Arabian Sea.

Seeking security for savings

Taiwan pulls out billions of dollars from U.S. banks to escape risks

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan, holder of one of the world's largest foreign exchange reserves, has pulled tens of billions of dollars out of U.S. commercial banks, which it fears could fail in an economic recession prolonged by a Gulf war.

Central bank officials said Monday that Taiwan had moved most of its U.S. dollar holdings to the U.S. Federal Reserve and to banks in Europe, Japan and Australia.

"The shift is mainly to protect our reserves as we face more risks by depositing our money in U.S. banks," a senior bank official told reporters.

Taiwan's "economic miracle," built on exports to the U.S., has generated foreign exchange reserves of about \$73 billion, competing with Japan's as the largest in the world.

Taipei keeps about \$60 billion in various currency holdings, mostly U.S. dollars. The rest is

in securities, including certificates of deposit and treasury bills.

Bank officials said that about \$35 billion — 58 per cent of the currency reserves — have been moved out of U.S. commercial banks since late 1990.

About \$20 billion was placed in Federal Reserve, with the remainder going to European, Japanese and Australian banks, the officials said. A smaller amount of money was also deposited in overseas branches of Taiwanese banks.

Economists and bankers said the bank's redistribution of Taiwan's export earnings reflected growing fears over the security of the U.S. financial system.

"They (the central bank) are concerned about the entire American banking system," said Norman Yin, chairman of the banking department at National Chengchi University. "They

have got to diversify." Central bank governor Samuel Shieh himself gave a bleak assessment of the U.S. economic outlook.

"The U.S. economy is in more of a shambles than you can understand, and war (in the Gulf) will prolong the recession," he told reporters at a regular briefing late last week.

Bankers said one reason for Taiwan's move was the fact that, as a foreign depositor, its holdings in U.S. commercial banks were not insured by the Federal Reserve.

While some banking analysts said there was probably a "tacit understanding" between the Federal Reserve and large foreign depositors in commercial banks, they said this may not have been enough for Taiwan's cautious money-managers.

"If I were central bank governor I'd do the same thing. If you leave your money there you

have no sense of security," said one senior foreign exchange dealer at a European bank.

Officials said the central bank now kept only small amounts of its reserves in major American banks to maintain business relations. They did not give figures.

Some bankers dismissed the news of the transfer, saying that despite jitters the United States remained the only place for a country like Taiwan to do its banking.

"This was probably just a procedural adjustment. They see credit ratings go down and they are required to do something," said Chen Chi-Chu, vice president of the International Commercial Bank of China.

Other than the U.S. market, where can you put such large sum of money?" he said. "The (U.S.) government is not going to let the big banks fail, so the downside risk is very small."

U.S. belittles Gulf crisis effect on economy

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. administration expects any Gulf war to be relatively short, without major impact on the economy, Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher said in an interview. "We believe that if there is a war that it will be a relatively short war. And that it will not have a major effect on the economy," he said. Mos-

bacher, who made his comments on U.S. television, said: "when the war is over or the crisis is over we think the demand ... and consumer confidence will come surging back." Without linking it directly to the Gulf situation, he said declining consumer confidence had been one of the major causes of the U.S. economic slump.

European policies cripple Argentine farmers

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Fifty years ago Argentina's cereal exports earned it the nickname "Europe's bread basket," but now Europe seems to be biting the land that once fed it.

Down on the farm in Argentina they are not complaining about taxes, government policies or the weather. On the once prosperous Pampa plains traditional grievances take second place to European farm policies.

European Community (EC) dumping of excess produce on world markets has driven prices down to levels at which farmers in Argentina can no longer compete, producers and officials say. Ernesto Rossi, who farms 1,800 hectares (4,500 acres) in the fertile wheat belt in southern Buenos Aires province, told Reuters he would be lucky to cover his costs this season.

"The outlook is really worrying. Prices have fallen so much that some farmers might just be able to recover expenses but others will inevitably end up in debt," he said.

Grain dealers said trades from the coming harvest have been struck at \$72 a tonne, less than

half the 1989 average price and well below the \$115 needed to give farmers a reasonable return on investment.

"The crops are in a very good shape but the financial outlook is far from promising because of the low prices," said Leonidas Gassoni, president of one of the country's largest farm cooperatives. "People are going to lose money."

Some farmers say it would be better to use wheat as cattle feed than sell it for so little.

Argentina and its 13 fellow members of the Cairns Group of farm exporting countries are pressing for sharp cuts in EC subsidies.

Argentine Agriculture Under-Secretary Felipe Sola has urged farmers to hold onto their produce in hopes of a successful outcome to the talks on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Farmers, however, say they cannot delay sales because they need money to plant late cycle crops, particularly soybeans, which have become the country's main foreign currency earner.

Insurance premiums skyrocket for ships plying Gulf route

SINGAPORE (R) — Insurance premiums for ships leaving Singapore for the Gulf have soared and some insurers are even refusing to cover shippers, insurance company officials said Monday.

As the Jan. 15 deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait approaches, some shippers are being asked to pay rates for Gulf routes many hundred times higher than normal, officials said.

"But others are not even offered any cover," one said.

"The insurance rates for the next few days will be about the same or higher than those during the height of the war between Iran and Iraq," said Ron Tan of Citicorp Insurance Brokers (Singapore) PTE Ltd.

"Many are shying away from shippers," Tan said. "It's terrible but you have no choice."

Hull insurance rates were likely to rise above four or five per cent for a seven-day period compared with 0.05 per cent a year on "peace" routes, Tan said.

For cargoes, the war risk insurance surcharge for ship own-

ers reached 7.5 per cent of cargo value at the peak of the Iran-Iraq war, compared to the average 0.75 per cent charged a week ago and the 0.025 per cent charged by insurers before the invasion of Kuwait, insurers said.

Skyrocketing insurance premiums have hit some airlines.

Singapore Airlines announced suspension of its flights to Cairo from Monday, saying a six-fold increase in insurance premiums for each landing in Cairo made the service unprofitable.

In Zurich, Swissair-Schweizerische Luftverkehr A.G. increased the price of its flights to the Gulf region from last Saturday, citing higher insurance costs.

The surcharges of between 50 and 200 Swiss francs per passenger were the second set Swissair had imposed since Iraq's takeover of Kuwait, the Swiss news agency SDA said.

The airline said the latest increase would still not cover the cost of insuring a flight to the Middle East, SDA reported.

S. Arabia confident war will not disrupt oil output

LONDON (R) — War in the Gulf should have no more than a minor impact on Saudi Arabian oil output, officials and oil executives in the kingdom have said.

Around 1.5 million barrels of Saudi Arabia's daily 8.3 million barrels production might be considered to be in a danger zone, but there are no plans to shut any facilities.

"I haven't heard of any plans to close down output anywhere. So far as I know production will continue as normal," a U.S. oil executive said by telephone from Dhahran.

But there are contingency plans to raise output elsewhere in the kingdom if the northern

oil fields — potentially most at risk — are forced to close.

A U.S. executive in London said defences around the refinery complex and main oil export terminal at Ras Tanura and the Aramco oil production facilities should cope with any attack.

Japan's Arabian Oil Company said last week it was cutting output from the Neutral Zone, an area between Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Output from the zone's Khafji and Hout fields would fall to 80,000 barrels per day (b/d) from 250,000 b/d.

The Safiniya offshore field, which produces up to 1.5 million b/d, looks vulnerable, but Saudi oil officials believe the protective shield would prove too much for Iraqi attackers.

War fears harm Egyptian tourism

ASWAN (R) — The Pyramids and ancient Pharaonic temples, normally teeming with tourists, are virtually empty and luxury hotels and Red Sea beaches are having one of their worst seasons in memory.

"Tourism has been awful ever since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August, but in the last few days it has been getting even worse," said an executive of European hotel chain in Egypt.

Egypt is well out of range of Iraqi missiles and sympathy for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein runs low among Egyptians, but operators say they are still scared to send tourists into the region while the political situation remains unclear.

As the Jan. 15 U.N. deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait approaches, airlines have been cutting flights to Cairo, and a few days ago of the last major tour operators still in the country suspended operations and pulled their manager back to Italy.

In Aswan in the south of Egypt, where the Nile passes between red granite cliffs, dozens of luxury cruise boats lie idle at their moorings and bored

drivers lean against their taxis.

At the Giza Pyramids and the temples of upper Egypt foreigners have all but disappeared.

Saturday night, only 17 tourists slept at Cairo's Marriott Hotel, which with 1,250 rooms is said to be the largest of any in Europe. A year earlier the number was 500.

Last year the hotel had 6,000 tourists during the first 12 days of January. This year there were 2,000, Marriott marketing manager Andrew Houghton told Reuters.

Houghton said the Marriott was trying to weather the storm by turning to businessmen and local holiday makers. Some executives, including 150 personnel of Kuwait Airlines, had relocated to Cairo from the Gulf and had made the hotel their temporary home.

Houghton said the Marriott had been forced to lay off staff and that other hotels relying mainly on tourism had been hit even worse.

Aswan taxi driver Fawzi Ahmed said hard times brought on by the crisis had forced him to postpone his wedding.

"Last year I could save

money, but this year I'm making only enough to buy food for my family," he said.

An Egyptian federation of private tourist operators Sunday estimated the industry's losses since the crisis started at \$3 billion and called on the government to help companies to lighten their debts.

Expatriates living in Egypt have been snatching up special bargain holiday packages in normally expensive and jam-packed hotels.

A receptionist at the five-star Nile Hilton Hotel told a business traveller at the weekend she had no vacant rooms with a view over the river "but there will be plenty from Jan. 15."

Some Western airlines, hit by higher insurance rates, have stopped or reduced flights to points all over the Middle East, including Egypt. Some plan to suspend services to Cairo for a few days beginning Jan. 16.

A surcharge of \$50 to \$200 has been added to flights out of Egypt and passengers say extensive overbooking as expatriates try to leave the country had created confusion at the airport.

Gulf Air cuts flights, moves base to Muscat

BAHRAIN (R) — Gulf Air is cutting flights and basing aircraft outside the Gulf in response to the Gulf crisis, airline officials and sources said Monday.

"The company has cut flights due to higher costs imposed by insurance firms," Gulf Air Chairman Yousef Shirawi told local newspapers after a board meeting Sunday.

Airline sources said Gulf Air was shifting its fleet of nine new Boeing 767 aircraft from Bahrain to the Omani capital Muscat, which is outside the Gulf, beyond the reach of Iraqi missiles.

Reduced services between Gulf states would be run by older Lockheed Tri-Star aircraft and Boeing 737s, the sources said. The airline planned to maintain some international flights from inner Gulf states of Abu Dhabi, Bahrain and Qatar.

Gulf Air is owned by those countries plus Oman.

Shirawi said Gulf Air would still operate flights from the Gulf to Cairo, London, Bombay and the Far East.

He gave no further details. Gulf Air officials said the airline was running its new schedule on a day-by-day basis but declined to specify how many flights had been cut so far.

Passengers said the changes were already causing delays and cancellations, in one case stranding people in the Qatari capital Doha Sunday night.

Many foreign airlines have suspended flights to the Gulf due to skyrocketing insurance costs.

A spokesman for Emirates, the Dubai-based airline saving the Gulf said it was running a normal schedule so far but could face further insurance surcharges. It has already added about seven per cent to the price of air tickets since the invasion of Kuwait sparked the current crisis.

The main word is volatility

Fear takes over as financial traders, analysts plot strategies

NEW YORK (R) — As the U.N. deadline for Iraq draws near, fear has taken over from greed as the major force in the market, as traders and analysts try to plot the likely scenarios and plan their own strategies.

Aside from war, the main word on everyone's lips is volatility, with the markets expected to climb or dive on each bit of news or hint of a development in the crisis ahead of the Tuesday midnight deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait.

"It will take a lot of stomach in the market to stay calm through Tuesday," said Anthony Karydakakis, senior financial economist at First National Bank of Chicago.

Weekend developments appeared to do little to alter the generally pessimistic mood in the markets. The congressional backing for U.S. military action had been expected and the last-minute peace overtures by United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar produced no concrete sign of progress.

The nervous mood was clear

last week when U.S. Secretary of State James Baker announced no progress had been made after talks Wednesday with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

Baker's statement quickly sent the Dow Jones industrial average down 80 points while oil jumped \$7 pushing up its value by nearly one-third in just a few minutes.

So skittish are the markets that as soon as Baker uttered the word "regrettably," prices began to move.

"It's going to be extremely volatile and one can come up with 1,000 different scenarios," said Stephen Slifer, senior vice president at Lehman Government Securities. "My sense is people are trying to get (positions) flat going into this period."

He and others expect many traders to close out their books and just sit on the sidelines. This in turn makes volume light, which can add to the wild price swings.

"It's hard for market participants to make bets at this time,"

Slifer said.

Any fighting is expected to produce a steep sell-off on Wall Street.

"The market is down nearly five per cent this year," said Alan Ackerman, executive vice president at Reich Co. "I think there's a serious element of the war fear in the market, but we may not have seen the end of it yet."

Jordan Times Tel: 667171

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Badran

(Continued from page 1)

Israel decided to expel Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Jordan. Such a move by Israel, the prime minister said, would widen the Gulf crisis and Jordan would break its neutral stand by defending itself against its attackers.

Jordan considers both possibilities as acts of aggression which it would resist, Mr. Badran said.

"Jordan, if attacked, will reply in kind," Mr. Badran asserted in the interview. Pointing out that the 21 Arab League countries pledged to defend Jordan if attacked by Israel, the prime minister added that both the governments of Syria and Iraq have already reiterated their pledges, saying that they viewed an attack against Jordan as equivalent to an attack on their sovereignty.

Asked if the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamist deputies included in the current cabinet were bound him to any particular policies, Badran began his answer by pointing out that no member of his cabinet was "fanatic or a strict fundamentalist."

"The Muslim Brotherhood and Islamist cabinet members are freely elected representatives of our society," Badran said.

The Muslim Brotherhood and Islamist members of the cabinet and Lower House represent a large sector of Jordanian society which Badran said was not fanatical or fundamentalist.

In an apparent response to the labelling by the Western press in particular of many of the new cabinet members as fanatical or fundamentalist, Badran said, "we have no unreasonable, fanatical or strictly fundamentalist ministers or Lower House deputies."

Protest

(Continued from page 1)

said Communist member of parliament Issa Mdanat, who was at the front along other deputies and activists.

"We demand the withdrawal of foreign troops from the region, and the implementation of all U.N. Security Council resolutions in the same standard," Mdanat told several reporters at the march.

Mamdouh Abbadi, an organizer and president of the Jordanian Medical Association, said that the youth attending the march would "fight with Iraq and do everything they can to fight America if war started."

A delegation of about 35 political activists earlier delivered a protest to U.S. President George Bush through the American embassy in Amman and a letter of support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein through the Iraqi embassy.

"For the last time, the voices of the people would like to warn you against playing with fire and we call on you to think about the future of humanity, as well as your people and interests," stated the protest, signed by all political groups and unions in the Kingdom.

The letter to Bush also warned the U.S. from starting

a war, which it said would be destructive to the region and the entire world. "You will be responsible before God and the history of humanity for any decision to attack the peaceful people of Iraq," the statement added.

In another statement delivered to the Iraqi embassy, unionists pledged support for Saddam Hussein and Iraq, saying that the Iraqi president has acted on the feelings and aspirations of the Arab people.

"You have acted upon the feelings of hundreds of millions of Arabs, who support you today and until you achieve victory," the statement said.

Attending the rally at the stadium were the Iraqi ambassador in Jordan and several members of the Lower and Upper House of parliament.

Surrounding the stadium, banners in Arabic and English called for the appreciation of one standard in implementing Security Council resolutions and warning the U.S. not to start a war in the Gulf region.

"We shall burn the Americans with Arab oil," "U.N. is a U.S. tool that uses two standards, and 'We shall destroy the interests of the U.S. and its allies,' read some of the banners.

The demonstrators, who ended up sitting on opposite ends of the stadium and or together according to political groupings, burned several American and Israeli flags as the crowds shouted and applauded.

Banners carried by the Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestinian Islamic movement, Hamas, read: "Yes to jihad (holy war) and martyrdom in defence of Jordan" and "Liberating Palestine is a national duty."

As they shouted "Allah Akbar," Islamist supporters chanted, "America, take away your soldiers because tomorrow they will step on you," and "Islamic revolution from the water to the water," referring to the entire Arab World.

Several speakers addressed the crowd at the rally in support of Iraq.

Islamist Deputy Ahmad Azaidah warned that "today is the day of anger and tomorrow is the day of action to hit all American and Western expansionist interests everywhere."

Deputy Faris Nabulsi from the Democratic Bloc expressed support for Iraq and called on the Western forces to leave the Arab region.

"Get out of our land, get out of our Holy Land," shouted Nabulsi as the crowd repeated the words after him.

In the final communique of the rally, organisers pledged total support for Iraq against the U.S.-led forces in the region "until the liberation of the Arab land and until the purification of the holy sites."

"The first bullet fired by the forces of evil against Iraq will be a signal to every Arab and Muslim in this world to explode the volcanoes of anger to wipe out all American, Zionist and Atlantic alliance interest on this earth," said Abbadi, reading out the final statement.

The final 17-point statement also supported what it called the national unity of Jordan and called for being

prepared to fight Israel in any battle that may take place. It also called for boycotting all American goods and to refrain from travelling to "countries of the enemy."

Waldheim

(Continued from page 1)

Kuwait.

Speaking to reporters before Dr. Waldheim flew in from Oman en route to Vienna, the King said he could not forecast if war could be halted now so close to Tuesday's U.N. deadline for Iraq to quit Kuwait or face attack.

"I honestly don't know," the King replied when asked if he thought a military confrontation in the Gulf could still be averted.

"We have done our utmost and my conscience is clear... I hope that others will succeed."

Dr. Waldheim has been touring the region to discuss possible moves to end the Gulf crisis. Mr. Perez de Cuellar left Baghdad Sunday saying "only God knows" if war can be averted in the Gulf.

The U.N. chief had several hours of talks with the Iraqi leader before flying to Paris to brief European Community (EC) representatives. He then returned to New York to brief the U.N. Security Council.

He said on return to New York his trip had failed and he had almost lost hope that war could be averted.

"I have done what I had to do," Mr. Perez de Cuellar told reporters. But when asked if he had lost hope, the United Nations chief said: "In some ways, yes."

Dr. Waldheim said of his conversation with Aziz: "Of course I stressed the need to make a gesture in regards to the withdrawal aspects because this is the basic issue."

"And I stressed the need to do our utmost to work out a peaceful solution of course based on the resolutions of the United Nations."

Mr. Aziz promised to convey this message to his president. I hope that maybe in the very last minute something positive comes of it," he said before leaving for Vienna.

Waldheim in August persuaded President Saddam to release Austrian nationals in the first visit to Baghdad by a Western head of state after its invasion of Kuwait.

In Amman, he held 90 minutes of talks with King Hussein.

The talks dealt with the latest developments in the Gulf crisis and Arab and international efforts to resolve the crisis peacefully, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The talks, which were held at Queen Alia International Airport, were attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker as well as the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh. The talks were attended on the Austrian side by the foreign minister and an accompanying delegation.

The Austrian president was seen off in the airport by King Hussein and senior officials.

King Hussein later expressed his joy over Waldheim's visit and expressed pride in the friendly relations between Jordan and Austria.

"We are proud of the friendship relations between our two countries which grew and developed on the basis of trust

and true friendship," the King said.

Speaking to reporters in the airport following the departure of the Austrian president, King Hussein said that he and Dr. Waldheim were "friends who care for the future of the world."

Dr. Waldheim "is an old friend whom I have known since many years during which he made great efforts to serve the cause of peace," he said.

Commenting on his talks with Dr. Waldheim, King Hussein said, "At this very critical moment in the history of the world, His Excellency gave us the chance to meet with him once again to exchange views in order to reach an assessment for the situation, which is something we highly appreciate."

"We are deeply worried and we believe we are living an extremely critical moment and that we should keep our eyes widely open," the King said.

"We should keep trying till the last possible chance," for peace, he said.

He also expressed hope that there might be a possibility of averting war.

In reply to another question about any moves by President Saddam, the King said that he did not contact the Iraqi president since his last visit to Baghdad and that he is just following the events.

Gorbachev

(Continued from page 1)

in the 10-month-old standoff between the Kremlin and the republic of 3.7 million people, which was annexed by the Soviet Union at the start of World War II.

The storming of the republic's main broadcasting facility provoked harsh condemnation from the United States and the European Community, and Western governments expressed renewed concern about the situation in Lithuania (see page 8).

In his comments to reporters during a break at the Supreme Soviet legislature in Moscow, Gorbachev did not identify by name the military leaders who ordered the assault. Nor did he express regret for the deaths or explain why he waited until Monday to comment.

The other Baltic republics, Latvia and Estonia, braced Monday for possible crackdowns. Citizens set up barricades in the streets of Riga, the Latvian capital, and gathered to protect telephone and radio buildings. Latvia's parliament met through the night.

Pavlov nominated

Gorbachev Monday nominated Finance Minister Valentin Pavlov as his candidate to be the Soviet Union's new prime minister.

Gorbachev told the Supreme Soviet that he had come to this decision "after much reflection and on the basis of broad accord" in Kremlin executive bodies.

The nomination by the Kremlin chief virtually ensured that Pavlov, a 53-year-old economist who has been finance minister since 1989, would succeed Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov in the post, Soviet analysts said.

Ramallah

(Continued from page 1)

the court, said: "Justice Aharon Barak... determined that there should be immediate distribu-

tion of protective kits to adults living in the Jerusalem area and communities along the green line."

Barak also ordered the army to make efforts to buy enough masks for all Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The army has handed out masks to most of Israel's 4.7 million people and has promised them to the 90,000 Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

The decision by a three-judge panel was in response to a petition by a Palestinian woman from Bethlehem.

After the court decision, the defence ministry issued a statement saying it would honour the ruling.

The ministry said the army's assessment was that the occupied territories were "not an area of danger of expected attack by an Arab country."

It noted, however, that the army began ordering masks for Palestinians after the Gulf threat arose "at the cost of a lot of money."

The statement gave no indication when sufficient masks would be available for the Palestinians or when distribution would begin.

Palestinian residents of Arab Jerusalem have already received masks and protective kits.

Miladi Marcos, the Bethlehem woman who filed the petition, told the court her sister, mother of an eight-month-old infant, was worried about a possible chemical attack.

Alert

(Continued from page 1)

the crossfire if a war erupts between its two mighty neighbours. The fears have been further heightened by Baghdad's vow to target Israel first in the event of an assault on Iraq by the U.S.-dominated multinational forces assembled in the Gulf, and Israel's warnings that it would retaliate for any attack.

The Israeli armed forces were also on full alert Monday, Israel Radio reported. It quoted an officer as saying that airforce pilots were "in the cockpit 24 hours a day."

"Israel is preparing for the possibility that, before Jan. 15 the Iraqis will fire missiles at it," said an Israeli security source quoted by Reuters.

Reports said Monday that the Bush administration had failed to persuade Israeli leaders to avoid involvement in a military conflict even if attacked by Iraq. The U.S. has voiced fears that any Israeli role in the crisis would weaken the anti-Iraq coalition which includes several Arab states which are technically at war with Israel.

King Hussein and other Jordanian leaders have repeatedly said that Jordan would not allow itself to be a springboard for attack against anyone. In recent television interview, the King said Jordanian forces would try to stop any warplane using the Kingdom's airspace in any conflict stemming from the Gulf crisis.

Jordan's military along the ceasefire line with Israel has been strengthened for fear that Israel might try to use Jordanian territory to strike at Iraq.

The military official told the Jordan Times that "if the situation in the Gulf deteriorates, then the Armed Forces may also be totally confined to barracks

ready to face any situation."

Army reservists have not been called to duty probably because of budgetary constraints, the official said. Other sources indicated that calling up the 100,000-strong reserve units remained an option.

Members of the voluntary People's Army were called to register at local offices for possible military duty.

Men and women, between the ages 16 and 55 years, have been trained on the use of light weapons, civil defence and first aid, including protection against chemical weapons.

All leave for civil defence and public security personnel has been cancelled, and some reserve units have been called up, sources at the Public Security Department (PSD) said.

Amman, with a population of one million, has about 60 bomb shelters scattered around the city and its suburbs.

U.N. chief

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Perez de Cuellar told reporters in Paris before his departure from there: "He never mentioned the word withdrawal, or if he mentioned the word, it was not in the sense of being prepared to withdraw."

When asked if he had raised the possibility of a settlement of the Palestinian issue, Mr. Perez de Cuellar replied, "The question was not raised."

Responding to criticism by President Saddam that he had met U.S. President George Bush repeatedly before his Iraqi initiative, the U.N. chief said: "I was not a messenger of President Bush. I was a messenger of the international community as a whole."

In Ottawa, Canada, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said Monday that he was disappointed at the failure of the U.N. mission to Baghdad and that any move to avert war in the Gulf confrontation now must come from Iraq.

Mr. Baker said he hoped "as the clock ticks down to midnight Jan. 15th that there will be opportunity to resolve this crisis peacefully and politically. That opportunity now must come from Baghdad."

France

(Continued from page 1)

The French proposal says the council members will "call at an appropriate time an international conference (with the appropriate structure) according to the declaration of the Security Council president Dec. 20, 1990, with the goal of assuring the security, stability and development in that part of the world."

The initiative takes the form of a proposed Security Council statement.

U.N. diplomats said Mr. Dumas might go to Baghdad for a final peace effort if Iraq and the Security Council appeared receptive to the initiative.

According to the proposed statement, the council would launch a final appeal to Iraq's leadership to announce without further delay their intention to withdraw from Kuwait according to a timetable, and to begin right away a rapid, large-scale withdrawal.

The U.N. secretary general would send in observers to verify the withdrawal and despatch a peace-keeping force drawn from Arab countries, while Iraq could

be given a guarantee against attack.

Measures would be taken, in cooperation with Arab countries, to promote negotiations to consolidate a peaceful settlement.

France was expected to urge the Security Council to adopt the initiative. The United States, as a permanent member, could veto the proposal.

French diplomats were not immediately available for comment on the plan, which was to be formally unveiled at a closed meeting Monday night in hopes of receiving council support.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar also was to report Monday night on his peace mission to Baghdad.

French President Francois Mitterrand, apparently brushing aside a European Community (EC) decision, Monday launched last-minute efforts.

The president, who met with Perez de Cuellar earlier in the day, sent a message to Saudi Arabia's King Fahd and held emergency talks with the Iraqi ambassador to France.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said Jean-Louis Bianco, secretary-general at the French presidency, delivered the message to King Fahd at a meeting in Riyadh.

The EC said Monday there was no point sending a peace mission to Iraq after Mr. Perez de Cuellar failed to make any progress.

Ministers of the 12-state bloc made their decision unanimously, diplomats said.

"The 12 have decided unanimously not to send a mission to Baghdad," an Italian diplomat said after a two-and-a-half-hour debate in Brussels.

The foreign ministers found "there are no new elements which justify a community initiative," an EC official said.

Dutch diplomats said the decision was taken at the request of Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who earlier briefed Foreign Minister Jacques Poos of Luxembourg which holds the EC presidency.

The 12 EC members had been divided over sending a mission of past, present and future EC presidents — Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands — to Baghdad.

They also agreed to discourage separate initiatives by individual members.

France, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Germany and Belgium had favoured a last-ditch initiative by the so-called troika. Britain, the most hawkish U.S. ally in the multinational coalition ranged against Iraq in the Gulf, was opposed.

Spokesman Bernard said Mr. Dumas did not attend the meeting of his EC colleagues and was continuing high-level contacts from his Paris office.

Mr. Dumas called on King Hassan of Morocco at the weekend and has met the foreign ministers of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt over the past few days.

Saddam

(Continued from page 1)

He described the confrontation between Iraq and the U.S.-led multinational force as a "historic showdown between the forces of good and the forces of evil."

Saleh called on people around the world to protest against what he called "American aggression against Iraq."

"In the name of the Iraqi people we members of the

National Assembly announce that we reject the logic of threats by U.S. forces against our country, the military buildup on our border as an affront to the feelings of millions of Arab and Muslims who reject the language of threats," he said.

"We declare here and now that we are ready to sacrifice everything for the cause of Palestine. Palestine should be liberated and rights of Palestinians restored."

Later in the day, President Saddam issued an open letter to Saudi Arabia's King Fahd pledging he would not attack the kingdom if U.S.-led forces withdrew.

In the letter, President Saddam noted that the two countries share numerous treaties, including a non-aggression pact, that makes the presence of foreign forces unnecessary.

King Fahd asked the United States and other countries to help defend the kingdom after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

The multinational force has more than 600,000 troops in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region, facing an estimated 590,000 Iraqi troops in Kuwait and southern Iraq.

Iraq, which has refused to withdraw its forces by Tuesday in accordance with a U.N. Security Council resolution, has criticised Saudi Arabia for inviting in the foreign forces.

President Saddam's letter decried the fact that although those forces were asked to defend Iraq, now they are poised to launch an offensive.

"What you have done... is outside God's law," the letter was quoted as saying.

President Saddam told King Fahd that U.S. President George Bush and his allies have "whispered evil... into your heart and pushed you to undertake the worst thing ever witnessed in the holy lands."

President Saddam has often described the Saudi monarch as an agent of the Americans and Israel.

It was not too late for King Fahd to reconsider his decision and ask the foreign forces leave the kingdom, said the Iraqi leader, who said Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries were telling him to do the same thing and leave Kuwait.

"God, the compassionate, is readily inclined to pardon... the true believers... so that everything is nothing but a bad dream that should not prevent the restoration of relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia to their correct framework."

"Then no aggression and no foreigner rules between us. The departure, without delay, is the only thing that can prevent that from happening."

"They (foreign forces) could then be replaced by faithful Arab armies, whom you could feel comfortable with."

Earlier, President Saddam said the last-minute initiative for peace in the Gulf is up to the Americans.

President Saddam spoke to Iraqi media officials Sunday night after meeting with U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

He said he encouraged Mr. Perez de Cuellar to continue his efforts and visits to Baghdad.

President Saddam said the action by the U.S. Congress authorising the use of force against Iraq "does not require any further action on our part" because Iraq was ready for war 72 hours after the Kuwait invasion.

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Jordan Times

Graf, Sabatini win opening matches in Australian Open

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Steffi Graf ran her Australian Open victory streak to 22 as she opened her bid for a fourth straight title and answered some of the bold talk of her rivals.

Graf sported a shorter haircut Monday and a blood-red bandana that gave her a lean and mean look in her 48-minute, 6-3, 6-0 hammering of American Jennifer Santrock.

Sprinting around the court and showing off a stronger backhand than she's ever had, Graf raced to a 4-0 lead before losing concentration and making four straight errors in a service break.

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Harvey-Wild, a 19-year-old American making her first appearance in Melbourne, took advantage of Sabatini's early caution and broke her in the first game. Sabatini grunted angrily at herself, bore down and broke back. Patrolling the baseline and reluctant to rush the net, Sabatini didn't go for winners as much as she let her net-charging opponent make mistakes.

Typical of the dangerous young players popping up on the women's tour, Harvey-Wild turned pro last year after one semester at the University of Southern California and promptly upset Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the first round of the Virginia Slims of Chicago.

Harvey-Wild hit forehands and two-handed backhands harder than Sabatini, but lacked the control of the veteran from Argentina.

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In the second featured night match, men's no. 2 Boris Becker played against Britain's Jeremy Bates.

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Girardelli of Luxembourg wins men's skiing event

KITZBUEHEL, Austria (AP) — Marc Girardelli of Luxembourg came back with a vengeance Sunday, winning the men's World Cup slalom event here for his first victory this season.

He clocked a combined time of 1:42.11 after finishing first in the first heat with a time of 51.02.

Girardelli's victory meant a resounding comeback for the 27-year-old, who had been winless this season after a long struggle with injuries.

He was eighth in Saturday's downhill to top the combined listings — a paper race determined on the basis of results of the downhill and the slalom.

With Sunday's victory, Girardelli took the lead in the overall standings with 151 points.

Second was Ole-Christen Furuseth of Norway with a combined time of 1:43.28 after coming in fourth in the first run.

Rudolf Nierlich of Austria, the winner of the 1989 World Championships in both the slalom and giant slalom and the victor at Kitzbuehel last year, was third in 1:43.62.

Italy's Alberto Tomba, who had the third best time in the first heat of 51.58 straddled a gate and lost a ski, disqualifying himself from the finish.

"It's a wonderful feeling" to be the winner again, Girardelli said after Sunday's race.

Germany's Armin Bittner, seventh in the first run, was fourth overall with a combined time of 1:43.75.

Austria's Michael Tritscher, who was second in the first heat, had a combined time of 1:43.99, but was disqualified because camera shots showed he straddled a gate.

Thus, Japan's Tetsuya Okabe was fifth with a combined time of 1:44.15, followed by Sweden's Mats Ericson with 1:44.55.

Austrian wins cross-country skiing race

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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY JANUARY 15, 1991

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The Solar Eclipse and New Moon in Capricorn emphasize group activities of a materialistic nature where persons of real prestige are concerned. Keep alert and to the facts only.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The way you do your assignments now has the answer whether you are to have more income and it is advisable that you do not go off too hastily.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 20) If you have any sort of desire to make some big changes, forget them until you have a more workable plan that can bring you happiness and peace.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You feel that almost anything that you do is putting you further and further behind the eight ball but if you keep promises made as well.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) This is the time when you have an insistent desire of a personal nature that just won't be still but it is essential you use charm.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You find you have to do your arithmetic correctly if you are to impress that person so important in your life who is now questioning your talents.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is the time for you to do those unique and progressive things that do mean a great deal to you

and you find later they pay off in big results.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have some very deep seated intuitions what you can do to yourself but you had better check these with your mature judgement or you'll make a mistake.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is the time for you to watch with care whatever your close partners are doing for they have some important plans they want you a part of.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية المستقلة

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MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
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Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

The day after

JAN. 15, 1991 will be recorded in history not so much as the date set by the U.N. for Iraq to leave Kuwait or face eviction by force, but as the day after which the world became a different place to live in. The change will be big or small, positive or negative, lasting or transient, frightening or reassuring, depending on how it is effected, through war or peace. Whoever came up with the idea that an arbitrary date like this can as well be a deadline for forcing a country into either submission or death did not probably know that clocks ticked away according to universal forces and not as a result of human relations.

Saddam Hussein would have very much preferred being dealt with as an earthy and magnanimous leader in efforts to solve the Gulf crisis. Instead, he was expected to accept what George Bush and Margaret Thatcher told him to do or else be labelled and treated as an international criminal or a pariah. The choices he was left with were stark and limited to: defiance of the first order, resorting to the laws of nature and to looking for solace in the metaphysical world.

Through his words and deeds since Aug. 2, Mr. Bush has sought to put the Iraqi president in a corner from which there could be no way out except perhaps through capitulation and humiliation. This is something that Saddam Hussein would never accept, and the Americans knew that. Still, the U.S. president persisted in his approach, contending somehow that this was the only and shortest way to peace.

Should there be war in this region, historians will prove him wrong. For nearly 24 years now, successive U.S. administrations, including this one, have maintained that the road to Middle East peace lay in compromise, negotiations and direct talks between enemies. They have ruled out pressure — at least against Israel — as an ultimately ineffective and mistaken policy to get the Israelis to withdraw from Palestinian territory and restore for the Palestinians their legitimate rights. But if this is history, witness the unfolding events in Lithuania today. Is this because the Israelis have a right to live in peace and dignity and the Palestinians do not that the Americans have employed two standards and a multitude of hypocrisy in dealing with either people? Or is it because Moscow has at its disposal 11,000 nuclear heads that Washington chose not to send its tanks and bombers to protect the Lithuanians from Soviet hegemony?

The Americans seem to know the answers to these and thousand other questions better than we do! Mr. Bush & Co. know it all, of course! They are the guardians of the perfect new world order that they are working hard to create! They are the descendants and successors of those who brought peace and justice in Vietnam, Latin America, Africa, Palestine and the whole world! They are the purely altruistic, uniquely democratic regime, which cares not a whit about its own self-interests and everything about equality and fairness for all peoples, that the world has ever come to know.

Javier Perez de Cuellar has vindicated the Americans: Saddam is the problem: he does not want to withdraw from Kuwait! Or does he?

It is difficult to remember when the U.N. secretary-general last mentioned Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, let alone asked for a deadline to implement them. Dare anyone ask him, along with his American friends, if they would ever send U.N. peace-keepers to protect Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, much less contemplate the dispatch of 450,000 troops to force Israel out of the occupied Arab territories or to get Soviet tanks out of Vilnius?

In all fairness to him, Saddam Hussein did utter the magic words of readiness to "withdraw" from Kuwait if the U.S. and the U.N. combined forces to dislodge Israel from the West Bank and Gaza. He said the magic words just a couple of days before Perez de Cuellar arrived to visit him, when on Jan. 11 he told a group of Muslim leaders that Iraq would not pull out from Kuwait unless a Palestine solution was found. And he had also said such words in the early days of August when His Majesty King Hussein met him on Aug. 3 and soon afterwards in the Iraqi president's initiative of Aug. 12, which incidentally still stands to this day.

If James Baker and Perez de Cuellar did not hear those words, in Geneva and Baghdad respectively, it is because they did not want or chose not to hear them in the proper perspective in which they were said. It is these two gentlemen's problem if they did not want or chose not to listen, even though, unfortunately and tragically, the cost will be borne by all of us.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

FOLLOWING five months of crisis in the Gulf and the deployment of huge forces in the Arabian Peninsula and the threats that accompanied all that, the world community seems to be going back to square one, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday. This starting point should be characterised with rationality and logic and wisdom as King Hussein has been calling for from the outset of the whole issue, said the paper. The King has been relentlessly spearheading a campaign for peace regardless of the anti-Jordanian stands on the part of certain nations and the embargo imposed on the Kingdom, the paper noted. The only alternative to peace, the paper said, is war and all that it entails of disasters and sufferings to the world community and the world's ecology; and therefore one can only hope that the United States and its allies will come to their senses at this last moment before the conflagration can devastate everything. Since the outset of the crisis King Hussein has been advocating dialogue and stressing that threats and intimidations can only be counterproductive, and he has been emphasising the need to deal with all issues in our region with the same criteria, the paper noted.

It all looks and sounds different from the Saudi desert

By Robert Fisk
in Dhahran

MOHAMMAD poured the hot, over-sweet tea. Abdullah handed round the plates of grapes, bananas and carrots. Jim Baker flickered on a black and white screen in the corner of the Arab tent.

It was a strangely comforting place to hear the news. We lay on brightly coloured carpets among six Saudis wearing white and brown robes with *zaffiyeh* headbands, our shoulders hunched against camel saddles. We munched away on spiced chicken and *shish kebabs* as the path to war was laid out before us. Mr. Baker suddenly looked up and said those dreadful hollow words — "regrettably, ladies and gentlemen" — which would have frightened us all. But the Saudis merely glanced at the screen with the same attention they would later apply to a videotape of a dance band.

When the Secretary of State

pronounced his fateful judgment — "in over six hours, I heard nothing that suggested to me any Iraq flexibility whatsoever" — only Mohammad's younger brother paid attention. He waved his hands level with his shoulders like a man in the act of surrender. "So it will be war. What can we do?"

Mohammad and Abdullah passed around more tea and fruit; others attended more to Mr. Baker now, Khaled, a thin young man with a goatee beard, checked his tongue. "On the day this starts," he said, "I shall pack up and leave."

Mohammad had rigged up his television-set to a home-made aerial, which sucked in the live broadcast from the Geneva press conference, transmitted from the nearest U.S. airbase. The signal was poor, but we could read the words "Intercontinental Hotel, Geneva" on the lectern in

front of Mr. Baker and listened to his explanation why he would not accept "linkage" between the Gulf crisis and the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was a curious experience.

To a Westerner, Mr. Baker made sense. He insisted that Iraq was opposed by "28 nations" rather than by the United States. "Now the choice lies with the Iraqi leadership. But when Tariq Aziz appeared on the television, his Arab accent drawing the attention of all in our little tent, Mr. Baker's words seemed somehow less convincing; not because Iraq had right on its side — everyone agreed that Saddam Hussein was a bad man — but because Mr. Baker was an American and Mr. Aziz, like the six Saudis, was an Arab.

While he was talking in English, he was talking to Arabs. His condemnation of American

threats, his promise that "Iraq will defend itself in a very bold manner" elicited no criticism. The Iraqi foreign minister's demand to be part of Mr. Bush's "new world order" even prompted one of Abdullah's cousins to nod in agreement. The fact that Mr. Aziz evidently did not want to mention Kuwait never struck those in the tent; they noticed that Mr. Baker did not want to talk about Palestine.

Why, I asked Mohammad, had the Saudis for so long been Saddam Hussein's friend. Had they really trusted him? Abdullah replied: "We were never told bad things about Saddam," he said. "We were told in our newspapers — by our government — that he was a good man. Governments always say what they want their people to understand. That is what happens here. We were not told the truth." Then did he think, I asked, that the

Americans would really leave Saudi Arabia? At this, Khaled stood up and announced angrily: "I will not stay here in this tent if you continue this conversation."

It was a dark, unimpassioned moment, as if the disaster presaged on that old, flickering screen somehow had at last penetrated the minds of the Saudis, creating some kind of disorder in the tent.

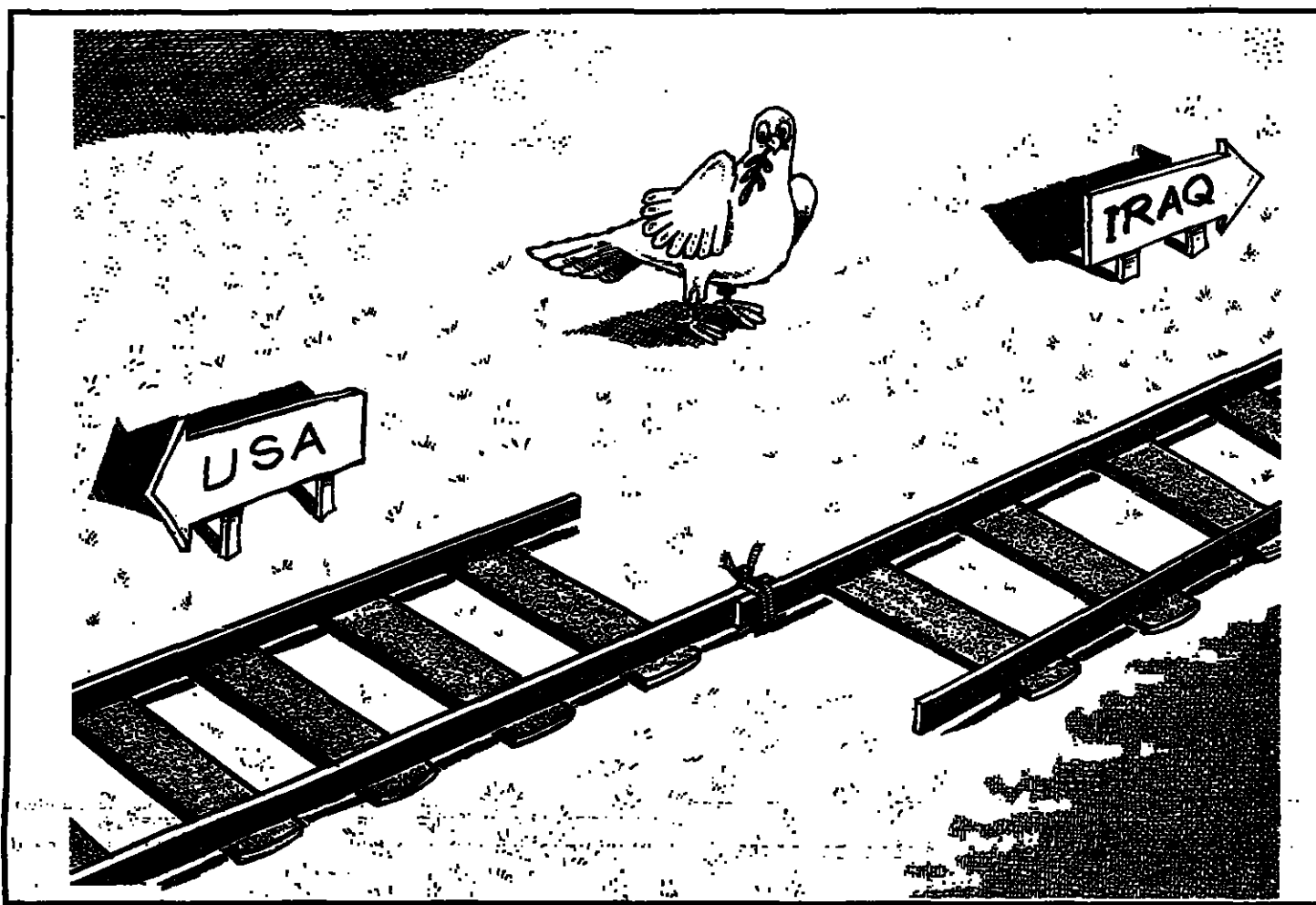
Khaled did actually leave the tent, his robes flowing at his heels until Mohammad left to plead with him to return. The men talked vigorously, Mohammad asserting that he would not leave his home if there was a war. "Where would I go?" he asked. "What is the point?" The war can go anywhere.

On the screen, Dan Rather, the prima donna of all American newscasters, was telling us of the possibilities of war. He spoke of bombardments of Iraqi forces,

of devastating Western air strikes, of "neutralising" Iraq's military potential. Yet, there, his words seemed unnatural, even cruel. He was a Westerner, talking with promiscuous ease about the possible violent deaths of thousands of Arabs at the hands of America. The Saudis listened in a silence that was very uncomfortable.

They might have spoken had there not come from behind us a growl of sound, persistent, gradually increasing in intensity. We all knew what it was: one of Mr. Bush's great C-5 military transports on the approach to the airbase. It was not more than 200 feet above our heads and its dim filled our vulnerable tent.

As the decibels dropped, we all looked at each other in what was, I suspect, a shared understanding. — The Independent



The mechanisms of the first attack

By Charles Aldinger
Reuters

WASHINGTON — A Gulf war would begin not with tank fire and the screams of wounded troops in the chill desert night, but deep inside Iraq with the blasts of cruise missiles fired from ships and bombs dropped by U.S. Stealth aircraft.

If the U.S.-led multinational force attacks Iraq, analysts say, the opening salvoes will come from battleships and the small F-117 jets designed to foil radar and place bombs guided by laser beams inside 15-metre circles.

The jets, plus long-range Tomahawk missiles from the battleships Wisconsin and Missouri far away in the Gulf, would be followed by strikes on Iraq and Kuwait by more than 1,300 U.S. and allied warplanes, according to the experts.

"There's no magic to it," said Lawrence Korb, a former assistant secretary of defence now with the Brookings Institution "think tank."

"Despite the talk about coordinated land-sea-air assault, you can bet the alliance will not immediately send troops against 540,000 dug-in Iraqis in and near Kuwait — not before air power gives them several days to see the light," he said.

If there is no surrender in the first week of the war, according to one former senior Pentagon officer who asked not to be identified, tanks and airborne troops of the U.S.-led alliance of Western and Arab states will probe Iraqi armour in southern Kuwait for weak spots and also attempt a northwest flanking movement toward Iraq.

Mass air raids would begin as soon as Iraqi command posts

and radar sites were knocked out by the F-117s and the cruise missiles.

Those raids would include destruction of Iraq's nuclear and chemical weapons production sites, said James Blackwell of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

"The Saudi-Kuwait border could be almost eerily quiet for the first days of the war," said Blackwell.

"Allied air power will destroy or jam Iraqi communications and radar, cut off the occupying forces in Kuwait and hopefully shred Iraqi military morale."

"I doubt those raids will be like anything seen since World War II, and maybe not even then given the accuracy of bombs and missiles today," added Harvard University professor William Kauffman.

While the air raids would con-

tinue night and day, the first strikes would be launched at night using heat-seeking and other targeting electronics, said Kauffman, who has written and lectured widely on military budgeting and strategy.

Analysts discounted suggestion that the United States might launch a pinpoint attack on one target to impress Iraq's President Saddam Hussein with the quality of the force against him.

"What would be the use of that?" Blackwell asked. "He would see it as the start of war and if he is going to strike Israel with long-range rockets, he would probably do it right away."

The Pentagon, anxious to defuse Iraq's offensive and defensive capabilities quickly and massively, is more likely to go after Iraqi missile sites from the word go, experts said.

LETTERS

Life is a gift from God

The following letter was sent to: U.S. President George Bush and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on Jan. 13.

Gentlemen:

THIS is a follow-up to our letter of Nov. 14, 1990, in which we appealed to you and other world leaders to do your utmost to achieve a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis.

We still believe that the only solution to this crisis is through peace talks, and that war is not in the interest of either of your countries.

We were extremely pleased that a dialogue took place between the U.S.A. and Iraq, and we feel that despite the fact that it led to no immediate breakthrough, it was a very positive step forward and we hope it will be followed up by other, even more fruitful talks.

It is our firm belief that one country's occupation of another country by force is unacceptable, but that such a principle can only be respected if it is adhered to consistently in all cases. We therefore believe that a call for an international conference to solve all Middle East problems should result in all violators of this principle to pull out of the countries which they are occupying.

We are confident that leaders of our highly modern, sophisticated world can find better solutions to dealing with crisis than simply waging war.

Life is a precious gift from God and you, Gentlemen, have the lives of millions of people in your hands. God-bless and guide both of you to choose carefully and wisely. President Bush, President Hussein, please, we urge you to heed the cries of your people. We do not want war!

Peace with God's Blessing,

Representatives

of International Women in Jordan

Open plea to Bush

Mr. Bush:

YOU have been addressed by various opponents of your Gulf policy (in spite of everything) as a man of intelligence. Here I want to question whether someone with your intellect would choose to plunge the whole world into a holocaust.

I assume that naturally a man of your position has many well educated advisors, some of whom are so called authorities on the Middle East as well as scientists who must have surely cautioned you about the disastrous ecological effects a Gulf war will have.

We, who are waiting for you to decide our fate, realise the grave consequences of war. You, who are so remote in a geographical as well as mental sense, will not be personally affected by any immediate battle. But think of all the people in your war theatre who will in one way or another be affected. How many Americans and Arabs must die to satisfy grotesque hunger for personal vendettas against Saddam Hussein? How many American women will become widows, mothers childless and children orphan because of any war you might wage against Iraq? Did you even consider us? We are mothers, wives, husbands and children too.

Please don't insult our intelligence and tell us that you are defending democracy and the right of Kuwait to its sovereignty, for we are a well informed people who understand that you want to destroy not only Saddam Hussein, but Iraq might as well. As for your antiquated version of democracy that you profess existed in pre-invasion Kuwait, we all know that this word was only an unobtainable dream in the minds of a few poor men. Also, don't tell us that you want to correct the Iraqi occupation of a territory not theirs, for we have watched the Jews from around the world occupy by force a country not their own for 44 years with the financial and moral support of the American government.

Little Palestinian children whom we call freedom fighters and you call "terrorists" are constantly mutilated and killed by American weapons and bullets. Beatings, torture and imprisonment of Palestinians is condoned and the words of freedom and self-determination crushed under Israeli boots. You speak of the brutal aggression of Saddam Hussein but you remain almost dead silent about unspeakable Israeli brutality.

You have a chance to prove to the world that you are a great man of peace by participating in a serious U.S.-Iraqi dialogue, by negotiating, by trying to solve the Palestinian problem and by understanding that the days of colonialism are over. Only a fool rushes into a war. A wise, cautious and cognizant man would never push the world to the brink of catastrophe. Instead of leading every country around the globe to a horrendous conflict, Mr. Bush, lead them to peace. The first word in any peace proposal is compromise and your insistence on no compromise is ludicrous.

Give our children a chance to grow up and to be free to have the same opportunities as American children. For once consider the Palestinian children and give them a chance to lead normal lives. Prove to the world that you are neither a "warlord", nor a "warmonger", nor a fiend and remember that only fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Start the new year with the seeds of peace and teach us all that the word democracy is not just a myth but a coherent reality and available to all peoples throughout the world regardless of race, colour or demographical area and then Mr. Bush, we will all consider you a man of true and great intelligence.

E. Yaghi

The story of the great love affair

By Jerry Dubrowski
Reuters

HOUSTON, — Ninety years after Texans danced under the black rain of a massive oil gusher, the United States remains addicted to oil through its love affair with the motor car and willing to risk war to protect supplies.

This week marked the 90th anniversary of the Lucas Gusher — a huge oil well on top of a Texas hill called Spindletop — that provided the spark for an unprecedented industrial era and coincided neatly with the fledgling auto industry.

This week also left just a few days for diplomats to avert a full-scale war in the Middle East, after Wednesday's failure of last-ditch talks between Iraq and the United States.

Tuesday is the U.N.-imposed deadline for Iraq to quit conquered Kuwait or face war with a U.S.-led alliance of Western and Arab states massed in the Gulf.

Historians say when the Lucas Gusher erupted in 1901, the men working the rig thought the oil supply was infinite.

Ironically, most of the oil from the first Texas gusher was lost in

the euphoria of the moment or burned up after a smouldering cigar ignited gases from the well.

"They finally after 10 days figured out how to stop it," said Joann Stiles, a historian at Lamar University near Spindletop. "When they opened it up ... nothing came out of it. The casing had collapsed and the well was destroyed."

For much of the 20th century, Americans have acted as if the supply of oil was never-ending, but it has been more than 20 years since a major oil field was tapped in the United States and oil companies have been forced to turn increasingly to cheaper supplies from the Middle East.

The United States is the third-largest oil producer behind the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia, pumping 7.2 million barrels of crude per day. But it is the world's biggest consumer, guzzling some 17 million barrels of oil daily last year.

Now as the nation faces its third oil shock in two decades, many critics say the Bush administration is preparing to go to war against Iraq to keep the supply of cheap oil flowing into the United States.

Although administration offi-

cials have been careful not to call operation Desert Shield a fight for oil, the latest rhetoric from the White House suggests oil — specifically the price of oil — is indeed a key factor.

"The struggling new-born democracies of Eastern Europe and Latin America already face a staggering challenge in making the transition to a free market, but the added weight of higher oil prices is a crushing burden they cannot afford," President George Bush said last Saturday in a radio address.

Since Aug. 2, when Iraq invaded and occupied Kuwait, oil prices have soared as high as \$41 a barrel and may even touch \$100 if Middle East oil fields are damaged by missiles.

Some conservationists say the United States could achieve energy independence by using less fuel, such as driving less and keeping cars in top condition.

According to a poll on Friday by pro-environmental groups, three out of four Americans surveyed would rather reduce dependence on foreign oil

through conservation than increased domestic exploration and production.

But many analysts are sceptical, saying Americans are more motivated by price than an interest in trimming dependence on foreign supplies. Americans showed no signs of cutting back when oil prices were lower in the late 1980s, they comment.

Demand dropped for the first time in seven years in 1990, a year of sharply higher prices, a weaker economy and a warm winter, according to the American Petroleum Institute.

The industry trade group said on Friday that demand for refined products such as petrol and heating oil fell last year by about 2.1 per cent to just under 17 million barrels a day.

Scott Peters, a spokesman for the Energy Awareness Council, said power plants are using less oil to generate electricity now than in 1973, but demand for oil as a transportation fuel has increased steadily.

"Transportation is where most of the oil goes," Peters said. Oil accounts for only 6 per cent of America's electricity needs and about 63 per cent of transportation.

More countries condemn Soviet army crackdown in Lithuania

LONDON (AP) — The United States and European nations Sunday condemned the Soviet crackdown in Lithuania, and Belgium's foreign minister said it could jeopardise a planned \$1-billion European aid package.

Britain said it would urge a review of all Western aid to Moscow, and Canada said it may scrap its Soviet aid programmes. In Washington, the White House said the Soviet action could affect U.S. President George Bush's plans to attend a summit in February with Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

NATO officials held an emergency meeting to discuss the situation in the secessionist republic, where Soviet troops stormed the broadcast centre in Vilnius, the capital, early Sunday.

Lithuanian officials said 13 people were killed and 140 injured in the attack. The Kremlin said 10 were killed and 130 injured.

In Brussels, Foreign Minister Jacques Poos of Luxembourg, current chairman of the European Community, demanded an explanation from Soviet authorities, "notably (who) gave the order to fire at unarmed civilians."

The Belgian foreign minister, Mark Eyskens, called for a meeting of European Community foreign ministers Monday and told Belgian Radio the EC could suspend its planned \$1-billion Soviet aid package.

Bush urged that the Soviets halt the crackdown, telling re-

porters: "There is no justification for the use of force against peaceful and democratically elected governments."

His chief of staff, John Sununu, said whether or not Bush attends a summit in February with Gorbachev could depend on what the Soviets do next.

"It depends what happens in the next few hours, the next few days," Sununu told CBS television.

British Prime Minister John Major said reports of killings were "deeply disturbing." He urged the Soviet government to halt military action immediately and refrain from further threats against other Baltic states.

"Further action, particularly if it were directed at the Lithuanian parliament, would compel us to review with our European partners the support we are giving the Soviet Union individually and collectively," Major said in a statement.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, on a tour of the Middle East, told reporters that he would suggest a review of Western aid to the Soviet Union.

German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and his

French counterpart, Roland Dumas, issued a joint statement urging Gorbachev to end the violence and open a dialogue with "freely elected representatives of the Baltic people."

At the Vatican, Pope John Paul II told a group of Lithuanians at St. Peter's Square that "I suffer and pray" with the Lithuanian people.

Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson said he was "appalled" by the news about the killings.

Anti-Soviet demonstrations took place outside Soviet embassies in Stockholm, the Czechoslovak capital of Prague and Warsaw, Poland.

In Stockholm, hundreds of protesters burned a Soviet flag and shouted slogans such as "Gorbachev murderer" and "give the Nobel Peace Prize back."

The Czechoslovak leadership passed a resolution recommending that the foreign ministers of Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary meet to discuss the Baltic situation.

In Tokyo, the Japanese Foreign Ministry expressed its concern over the number of casualties.

Baltics to have difficulty getting attention at U.N.

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Lithuania and other Soviet republics will have difficulty gaining official attention at the United Nations despite a public appeal to the world body for help, U.N. sources have said.

Under its charter, the United Nations is barred from interfering in members' internal affairs, although the organisation is pressing that prohibition as it breaks new ground in such areas as human rights and the environment.

Lithuania, a Soviet republic of 3.7 million, has been actively seeking independence despite rigorous economic sanctions imposed by Gorbachev and warnings of worse to come from Soviet hardliners.

It was an independent state before being forcibly annexed into the Soviet Union in 1940.

The key is what will be the effect of events in Lithuania on world policy toward the Soviet Union," he said.

The question was whether the operation had the approval of Gorbachev and signalled a basic change in policy, one, Asian diplomat said.

For Tokyo, Gorbachev was a better alternative than any leader likely to replace him, Hiroshi Takano, a professor of international relations at Bunkyo University, said.

"During the Gulf crisis, Japan does not want to be isolated from the West, so it will react cautiously and move in line with its allies," he said.

With Gorbachev in power, Tokyo's relations with Moscow have improved greatly, although no solution was in sight to Japan's claim for the return of four northern islands seized by the Soviet army in 1945.

Soviet officials have said the independence demands by Lithuania and other republics had made it more difficult for Moscow to negotiate the issue of the four islands, since giving them up would set a precedent.

"If the Soviet government is prepared to kill its own citizens to prevent Lithuanian independence, it is likely to give up territory inhabited by ethnic Russians," the diplomat said.

The next round is scheduled for February.

The United States is pressing for a 10-year deal on Subic and continued access to Clark. Manila wants the United States to hand over control of the airbase next September and a five-to-seven year phaseout for Subic.

Manglapus said he would go to Washington later this month for informal talks with U.S. officials on the bases, but said no negotiations would be held there.

"I do feel optimistic that after one more round of talks, we will be able to conclude negotiations. I can say (that) with great hopeful confidence," Manglapus said.

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40 die in S. African soccer stampede

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Forty people were trampled to death Sunday when thousands of South African soccer fans stampeded to escape spectators brawling with knives and ripped-up chairs at a match south-west of Johannesburg.

"People were running all over and screaming, trampling men, women and children," said photographer Mbuseni Zulu.

The victims, including two children, were crushed to death against a stadium fence, trampled underfoot or stabbed as thousands of fans surged towards a jammed exit. More than 50 people were injured.

"Tragedy occurred in a matter of moments," said Nelson Mandela, deputy president of the African National Congress (ANC) anti-apartheid movement, who issued a statement from his home appealing for calm.

The incident took place only a day after gunmen firing automatic weapons and hurling grenades killed 35 ANC followers and wounded more than 40 in a pre-dawn attack on a prayer vigil in the black township of Sebokeng outside Johannesburg.

The soccer violence erupted in Orkney 150 kilometres from Johannesburg during a friendly match between the country's two most popular teams, the Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

Local police Major Ben Van Heerden said by telephone the death toll could rise because some of the injured were in a very serious condition.

The trouble started when some of the 20,000 spectators started arguing over the referee's decision to allow a goal by Fanie Madiba of the Kaizer Chiefs.

Zulu said fighting broke out among fans who battled with "chairs, cans, sticks, umbrellas, knives, anything they could find, and then people started to try and escape."

"People ran onto the pitch screaming and collapsed," he said. Others started to escape but fell under the stands and were trapped in the rush. Two boys aged about 10 were among the dead.

Zulu said he saw an off-duty black policeman stagger onto the pitch complaining he had lost his pistol in the crush. The badly-injured man collapsed and died moments later.

Van Heerden said fans were mixed together in the stands in contrast to the normal practice of separating followers of opposing teams, but no alcohol was allowed into the stadium.

Soccer is the main sport for South Africa's blacks, who outnumber whites by five to one. "We learn with shock and horror of the needless deaths," said Mandela. "Our country is experiencing too much death and destruction."

"Let us work to ensure that all sports facilities are built to serve and protect the people and prevent future tragedies."

The National Soccer League ordered officials of the two Soweto-based clubs to an emergency meeting Monday morning to try to discover the cause of the disaster.

Soares trounces opponents for 2nd term

LISBON (R) — Portuguese President Mario Soares won a resounding personal victory when he was re-elected for a second five-year term with the highest share of the vote since the 1974 revolution.

With almost all votes from Sunday's poll counted, election officials said the 66-year-old Socialist had 70 per cent.

Right-winger Basilio Horta took around 14 per cent, Carlos Carvalhas of the orthodox Communist Party 13 per cent and extreme leftist Carlos Marques three per cent.

"This is the victory of good citizenship, of tolerance, of liberty," Soares told a cheering crowd outside his campaign headquarters, to chants of "Mario, Mario." "I will be the president of all Portuguese, as I was in the past."

Soares's share of the vote was well above the 61.6 per cent won by General Ramalho Eanes in 1976.

And with the result never seriously in doubt, the abstention rate was also a record for a national election. Almost 40 per cent of Portugal's eight million voters stayed at home or took advantage of radiant winter sunshine for a day in the country.

Political analysts say the result will have little immediate impact on Portuguese politics as Soares was supported by both the Socialists, the main opposition party, and the ruling centre-right Social Democrats.

But party moguls will be draw-



Mario Soares

ing their own conclusions with a view to the parliamentary elections due by next October, when Socialists and Social Democrats will be slugging it out.

A former combative Socialist prime minister — he quit the party formally on becoming head of state — Soares won the 1986 presidential elections with 51.3 per cent in a straight left-right fight.

But his sure populist touch and easy coexistence with Social Democratic Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco Silva enabled him to broaden his appeal.

His victory margin, higher than in any presidential or parliamentary election since the revolution ended half a century of right-wing dictatorship, gave him a powerful claim to have succeeded in his ambition to be "president of all Portuguese."

Executive power in Portugal is wielded by parliament. The president's role is to protect the constitution, represent the nation and advise the government. Soares is Portugal's 16th president since the monarchy was overthrown in 1910.

COLUMN

Barbara Bush fractures leg

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. first lady Barbara Bush has fractured her left leg while sledding with her grandchildren at the presidential retreat in Maryland, a spokeswoman said, Mrs. Bush, 65, wife of President George Bush, "sustained a non-displaced fracture of the left fibula bone in her leg, some bruises and slight scrapes," her office said.

"Easy for him to say," Mrs. Bush said. They spoke with reporters on their return to the White House from the presidential weekend retreat at Camp David. Mrs. Bush was in a wheelchair. She was injured early while playing with four grandchildren when she rode down an icy slope on an aluminium "saucer" and hit a tree. She was X-rayed and treated at a local hospital. "Mrs. Bush is no good spirits and her complete recovery is expected within five to six weeks," her office said. "She is in some pain, but no medication has been prescribed," said a spokeswoman.

Mrs. Bush will use a wheelchair to get around for several days and then crutches, the spokeswoman said. The first lady "cannot put any weight on her left leg for several days," according to a statement issued by her office. "The injury, however, will not require a cast."

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Primitive bacteria discovered

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP) — A New Zealand research team says it has found dense mats of bacteria, believed to be the world's southernmost life form, growing in fresh water ponds only 1,100 kilometres from the South Pole. Team leader Clive Howard-Williams of the Department of the Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratory said the bacterial colonies were "the last thing they expected to find at a latitude of 90 degrees south."

The colonies were in an otherwise unexplored valley by the Hatheron Glacier below Mount Asa. Howard-Williams said the team's interest in the valley had been whetted by New Zealand geologist Graham Claridge, who sledged past the foot of the valley about 30 years ago and recorded the place in his notebook as the "Valley of a Thousand Lakes." Howard-Williams said there were at least 900 ponds and one lake several kilometres across in the small valley, many clear of ice or with only a thin layer on top, probably due to the heat being trapped by the bare rock mountainsides around the valley. "We had thought we might find a few cells and expected many lakes to be frozen solid," he said. Instead, they found dense mats of bacteria, often pink or brown in colour.

Greece has expressed alarm at the number of refugees fleeing into its territory. More than 1,500 people, mostly destitute young men, both illiterate and unskilled, have crossed in the past week.

Greece has pledged that it will help Albania with political and economic reforms if its northern neighbour will help stem the tide of those fleeing into refugee camps along the border.

Earlier in the day Albania rejected a Greek request that the Geneva-based United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees tour southern Albania to assess the situation.

A UNHCR team toured the refugee camps in northern Greece last week.

Rare birds flock to New York City

NEW YORK (AP) — A new breed is flocking to town, attracted by New York's high-rise residences, its stately churches and bridges, its large number of fat, tasty pigeons. The city boasts at least nine pairs of the endangered peregrine falcon, one of the nation's largest concentrations.

"They fly into town and think, 'wow, the perfect nesting spot,'" says parks commissioner Betsy Gotbaum. During the last three years the falcons have nested atop office towers, churches, bridges and New York hospital, where Dr. John Aronson admires a pair named Red-Red and Buster from his office window on the 19th floor. "They make life a lot more pleasant around here," the surgeon says. "Watching them takes your mind off your patients' problems, or whatever's bothering you."

In good weather the patients themselves watch from a lounge on the 12th floor. Why does New York, which seems to have a tenuous hold on many of its human residents, look so good to a 3-pound predatory bird? Food, for one thing. In addition to its peerless supply of pigeons, starlings and sparrows, the city sits right in the middle of the Atlantic flyway, an avian migratory route, which guarantees the falcons a varied diet. Experts also say that the city's tall structures, many situated near parks or rivers, resemble the falcons' natural cliffside habitat. The bird sits motionless on a perch above its prey, finally diving down for the kill at up to 320 kilometres per hour. Life, in fact, may be better here for the falcons. This spring six of 13 chicks born in the city lived long enough to "fledge," or fly away, compared with five in Yosemite National Park, which has five falcon pairs.

Japan following European, U.S. lead on Soviet policy

TOKYO (R) — Japan will avoid taking an independent initiative toward Moscow after the Soviet military crackdown in Lithuania and will follow the U.S. and European lead, officials and diplomats said Monday.

A desire in Tokyo not to offend the West during the Gulf crisis and to keep Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in power as better than any alternative ruled out drastic action despite the fact Japan has its own agenda with Moscow, they said.

Government leaders responded quickly to the killing of at least 13 people and the injuring of more than 140 when Soviet paratroopers, backed by tanks, seized a radio and television station in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius Sunday.

Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu told reporters Monday the Lithuanian crisis should be settled through peaceful dialogue.

Japan might reconsider its aid policy toward the Soviet Union if Gorbachev was found to have ordered the crackdown, chief cabinet secretary Misoji Sakamoto said.

"If the military action in Lithuania was taken by direct order of President Gorbachev, that's really serious, and could represent the end of perestroika," Sakamoto told reporters. "If so, we'll have to recon-

sider our aid policy towards (Moscow)."

Japan could not overlook use of military force in Lithuania since such action was inconsistent with Gorbachev's perestroika reform programmes, Sakamoto said.

Soviet Interior Minister Boris Pugo told angry deputies in the Soviet parliament Monday that the Kremlin gave no orders for the army to open fire in Lithuania at the weekend.

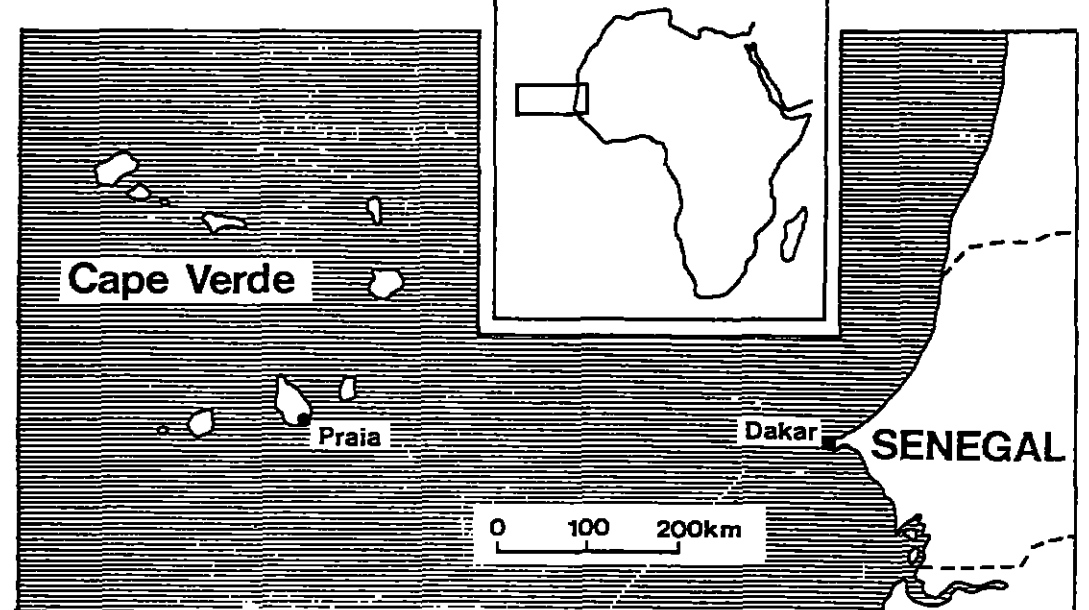
No changes have been made in Gorbachev's planned visit to Japan in April or in Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama's visit to Moscow later this month, Sakamoto said.

Use of military action as an instrument of policy would demolish the two pillars of perestroika and democracy and openness, the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper said in an editorial.

"We fear that the Soviet Union is becoming a closed society again, with values different from ours," it said.

While the European Community (EC) and United States had expressed regret, they had not changed their policy toward Moscow, said an official of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

"We have to check the outcome of the EC meeting on the



Opposition wins Cape Verde elections

PARIS (R) — Voters have swept Cape Verde's ruling PAICV party from power in the first multi-party elections in Portuguese-speaking Africa.

The PAICV (African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde) had ruled the arid archipelago off West Africa since Portugal pulled out in 1975.

Unofficial results early Monday gave the opposition Movement For Democracy (MPD) 65 per cent of the votes in Sunday's parliamentary elections ending 15 years of one-party rule.

Prime Minister Pedro Pires conceded defeat on national radio, sending hundreds of MPD

supporters onto the streets in noisy celebration.

"The electorate considered that the PAICV was not capable of governing for the next five years," he said.

The 160,000-strong electorate voted for a 79-seat parliament and will vote in presidential elections on Feb. 17.

MPD leader Carlos Veiga, a 41-year-old lawyer, pledged to dissolve the political police but said there would be no witch-hunt against the former ruling party.

Cape Verde, a mixed-race society with one of the highest standards of living in West Afri-

ca, is the first of Portugal's five ex-colonies in African to abandon Marxist dogma, and one-party rule after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.

Little Sao Tome and Principe has scheduled multi-party elections for parliament on Jan. 20 and for presidency on March 3.

The ruling parties in both Mozambique and Angola, their economies shattered by years of devastating civil war, have begun moves to introduce multi-party systems.

The ruling party of Guinea-Bissau is expected to embrace a shift to political pluralism at a congress later this month.

Iliescu in China; Romanian police attack protesters

PEKING (R) — Romanian President Ion Iliescu arrived in China for a state visit Monday, the first by a head of state from Eastern Europe since communism began to fall there in 1989.

He is scheduled to meet President Yang Shangkun. Premier Li Peng and Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin, who regarded Iliescu's predecessor, executed hard-line President Nicolae Ceausescu, as an "old friend."

China's leaders have circulated internal party documents denouncing the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, but have adopted a pragmatic foreign policy of establishing relations with the new governments there.

Peking, which used tanks to crush its own pro-democracy movement in June 1989, had praised Ceausescu's attempts to hang on to power.

Just before he was removed from office, Ceausescu appealed to Peking to join his crusade to preserve communism.

In an interview published in Monday's edition of Outlook, a Chinese current affairs publication, Iliescu said his visit "will make contributions to building up Romanian-Chinese relations on a new basis."

His three-day visit was originally scheduled to last six days, but was cut short, apparently due to the Gulf crisis, the official

New China News Agency said. China's official press, which reported violence in Lithuania, did not mention anti-government demonstrations in Bucharest Saturday.

The official China Daily newspaper said Monday the visit would help open a new chapter in economic and trade relations.

Iliescu will have talks with Chinese leaders about "pulling the bilateral trade out of its present ebb," it added.

Last November the two governments agreed to end 40 years of government barter trade and switch to free cash trade, local barter agreements, compensation trade and mutual investment, the paper said.

It said 1990 barter trade sank to 372 million Swiss francs (\$283 million) worth of contracted agreements with only 210 million francs (163 million) worth of goods actually traded.

The year before, contracts worth 660 million francs (\$512 million) were signed and 600 million francs (\$465 million) worth of trades were carried out.

China provides Romania with petroleum in return for chemical fertiliser, other chemical products and steel products.

Meanwhile in Bucharest, a Soviet army crackdown in Lithuania found an echo at the weekend in police violence against anti-government demonstrators.

Riot police in Bucharest indiscriminately clubbed and kicked protesters, reporters and photographers alike Sunday to end demonstrations which blocked central Bucharest traffic for three days in a row.

Romania was the last among the East European states to ditch communism a year ago and the Bucharest violence came as at least 13 people were reported killed when Soviet troops backed by tanks stormed key buildings in the capital of Lithuania, which seeks independence from Moscow.

Romanian riot police Sunday charged protesters, mostly teenagers, in the capital's University Square. Several youths replied with petrol bombs.

The violence flared after the third day of protests in nearby Revolution Square organised by the country's biggest non-parliamentary opposition bloc, the Civic Alliance.

The Alliance is a channel for discontent against the National Salvation Front (NSF) government comprised mainly of ex-Communists.

The Civic Alliance demands the resignation of Iliescu and

Prime Minister Petre Roman. It also wants the full truth about how they took power during the bloody December 1989 uprising in which Ceausescu was toppled and executed.

For three days violent clashes erupted between riot police and militant non-alliance protesters who gathered after Alliance rallies, which drew many thousands of peaceful anti-government marchers.

Iliescu, quoted Sunday by the Romanian News Agency, Rompres, expressed concern about the mounting unrest, especially in the capital and the west Romanian city of Timisoara, birthplace of the 1989 rebellion. He also appealed for calm.

A Romanian police spokesman was quoted by state television Sunday as saying a car carrying Interior Minister Doru Ursu was attacked by demonstrators during Sunday's violence. It did not say if Ursu was hurt.

Police also said in the statement that journalists should ask for police protection before covering such events.

Accredited journalists carry an official identity card which orders civil and military authorities to protect the bearers. Journalists have been beaten by riot police in the past three days despite showing their credentials.